



Ichabod Crane Central School District

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January 13, 2009

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Dear Parent/Guardian:

We have been contacted by the Columbia County Health Department today with the following information. Currently nine children who attend the Ichabod Crane School District have been diagnosed with chickenpox. The purpose of this letter is to inform you of recommendations for the control of chickenpox that are available and to encourage you to discuss this with your child's healthcare provider.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) has issued recommendations for the control of chickenpox. Individuals who have received one dose of chickenpox vaccine should receive a second dose as long as the appropriate time has elapsed since your child received the first dose of the vaccine. Those who have never received the chickenpox vaccine and have never had chickenpox disease should receive their first dose. In addition, individuals who were born in the United States before 1980 or who have had a positive chickenpox blood test are considered immune and do not need vaccination. Adults who might be at increased risk for exposure or transmission, and who do not have immunity should consider vaccination. All healthy adults who are not immune to chickenpox are recommended to receive 2 doses of varicella vaccine 4-8 weeks apart. **Persons who have had chickenpox in the past, do not need vaccination.**

The New York State and Columbia County Health Department currently support giving a first and/or second dose of chickenpox vaccine in settings where there is ongoing chickenpox disease.

Chickenpox is a highly contagious viral disease that is spread by contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, by contact with airborne droplets, and by direct contact of inhalation or aerosols from vesicular fluid of skin lesions from infected persons. Initial symptoms of chickenpox commonly appear 14 days after exposure and include sudden onset of slight fever and feeling very tired and weak. These are soon followed by an itchy blister-like rash, usually appearing first on the scalp, then moving to the trunk and then to the extremities. Although chickenpox is usually mild in healthy children, adults and certain children may have more severe disease and have a higher incidence of complications. Chickenpox may cause severe disease in newborns, or those with weakened immune systems from diseases such as leukemia, lymphoma, or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

If your child has had chickenpox illness in the past, he or she is not at risk of infection. If your child is immunized with chickenpox vaccine, chances are very good that they are protected from contracting chickenpox, although there is a slight possibility your child may develop a mild form of the illness if exposed. Though mild, these "breakthrough" cases are still contagious.

If your child does develop chickenpox, he/she should be kept from attending school until all of the chickenpox lesions are completely scabbed over, even if your child has received the chickenpox vaccine.

Please take this letter to your doctor and discuss a second dose of varicella vaccine for your child (a second dose is recommended for all children through age 18). If you have any concerns or questions or would like to schedule a varicella vaccination, please contact your child's doctor or you may contact the Columbia County Health Department at (518) 828-3358. EXT. 1300

Sincerely,

Maureen Van Deusen
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

MISSION STATEMENT: In our quest for excellence, the Ichabod Crane Central School District is dedicated to preparing all students to meet the challenges of our future and to appreciate the value of their own lives by nurturing each individual's unique talents, instilling a desire for lifelong learning, and fostering a strong spirit of community.

NON-DISCRIMINATION COMPLIANCE STATEMENT: The Ichabod Crane Central School District hereby advises students, parents, employees, and the general public that it offers educational opportunities including vocational opportunities without regard to sex, race, color, national origin, handicap or religion. Inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy may be directed to: Title IX and Section 504 Compliance Officer, Maureen VanDeusen, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Ichabod Crane Central School District, Valatie, NY 12184, (518) 758-7575. A copy of the "In Compliance with Section 1.4 (a)" is available in the Superintendent's Office.