Slapped cheek disease
Slapped cheek disease is a viral infection that mainly affects primary-school-aged children. It results from being infected with human parvovirus B19. It causes a bright red rash on the cheeks, which look as though they have been slapped – hence the name.

Like many viral infections, it is spread by mucus from an infected person when sneezing or coughing. This mucus is carried by hand to the mouth or nose of another person.

The incubation period for slapped cheek disease is usually between four and 14 days after contact (in rare cases, up to 21 days). This infection is also called slapped face disease, slapped cheek syndrome, fifth disease or erythema infectiosum.

For most children, infection with slapped cheek disease initially causes little more than cold symptoms. These generally improve after a few days, when the rash starts to show.

Most people with slapped cheek infection need little if any treatment. Rest and pain-relieving medication (such as paracetamol) may help.

The infection can be more serious for pregnant women. Rarely, if a pregnant woman gets this infection, there can be serious consequences to her unborn child, including miscarriage. Most unborn babies are not affected, even when they get this infection.

### Symptoms of slapped cheek disease

The first symptoms seem like a cold and can include:

- fever
- tiredness
- aching muscles
- headache
- sore throat
- runny nose, coughing and sneezing.

As these cold-like symptoms start to improve, the rash on the face appears. This rash is bright red, 'lacy' (with patches of normal coloured skin within the red areas) and often itchy. The person may also develop a pink blotchy rash on the limbs or torso after a few days. Many people (up to 20 per cent) do not have any symptoms at all when they have the infection.

### Symptoms of slapped cheek disease for teenagers and adults

Arthritis-like symptoms, such as swollen ankle, knee and wrist joints, are common for teenagers and adults with slapped cheek disease. This complication is more common in female teenagers and adults, and is sometimes the only symptom of infection.

Normally, it takes around two to four weeks for the joints to get better. However, in some people, the swelling can last for months. Unlike true arthritis, there is no danger of permanent damage, even if the joints are affected for a long time.

### Parvovirus B19 and slapped cheek disease

Parvovirus is a virus that lives in red blood cells. It can only infect humans and is different from dog or cat parvoviruses.

Children between the ages of five and 15 years are prone to contracting the disease. Adults who have regular contact with children, such as teachers and child healthcare workers, are also at increased risk. However, over half of all adults are immune to the virus because they had the infection in childhood.

People are infectious during the incubation period, which is usually about a week before the rash appears. Once the characteristic rash has appeared, the person is no longer contagious. This pink, lace-patterned rash tends to last for around one to three weeks, and is made more obvious by exercise, sunlight or hot weather.
Groups at high risk for slapped cheek disease

Generally, the slapped cheek virus is a mild illness that doesn’t pose any health risks to the sufferer. However, contracting the virus is serious for people with specific conditions such as pregnancy, weakened immunity and haemolytic blood disorders.

Pregnancy and slapped cheek disease

In Victoria, about 60 per cent of women aged 20 to 39 will have had the infection before their pregnancy and will be immune. Some will get it while they are pregnant (between 1.5 and 15 per cent of women of child-bearing age in Victoria contract the infection each year).

The risk to unborn babies is low. Even if the mother is affected, only one-third of babies will develop the infection (generally about a month after the mother's illness).

A pregnant woman who believes she has been in contact with a case of parvovirus infection should consult the doctor supervising her pregnancy, even if she has no symptoms.

If a woman who is pregnant gets the infection, her baby’s development will need to be monitored (for example, by ultrasound).

In rare cases, infection during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy can cause a form of anaemia (low blood count) in the baby. In many cases, this resolves by itself, but in about five per cent of cases it may require treatment. Very rarely, it can cause a miscarriage or stillbirth. Parvovirus infection does not cause birth defects.

Weakened immunity and slapped cheek disease

People with compromised immune systems (for example, people being treated for cancer or severe asthma, or those with HIV/AIDS) can develop chronic and severe anaemia with slapped cheek disease. They may require a transfusion of red blood cells to maintain an adequate level of haemoglobin.

Haemolytic blood disorders and slapped cheek disease

Those with disorders such as sickle cell anaemia, thalassaemia and hereditary spherocytosis can experience a sudden drop in haemoglobin, the protein that transports oxygen around the blood, with slapped cheek disease. In severe cases, this can lead to heart failure. A transfusion of red blood cells to maintain an adequate level of haemoglobin may be required.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- NURSE-ON-CALL, Tel. 1300 60 60 24 – for expert health information and advice (24 hours, 7 days)
- Maternal and child health nurse
- Maternal and Child Health Line (24 hours) Tel. 13 22 29

References

- Slapped cheek or fifth syndrome, 2010, The Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne.

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More information

Infections

The following content is displayed as Tabs. Once you have activated a link navigate to the end of the list to view its associated content. The activated link is defined as Active Tab

- Infection explained
- Preventing infections
- Managing infections
- Childhood infections
- Animal to human infections
- A-Z of infectious disorders

Infection explained

- Antibiotic resistant bacteria
  Careful prescribing of antibiotics will minimise the emergence of antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria...
- Beat the Bite
  Beat the Bite is a Victorian government health campaign to highlight awareness of the risk of mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria. Find resources to be printed and shared along with videos that tell...
- Chest infections
  A chest infection affects your lungs, either in the larger airways (bronchitis) or in the smaller air sacs (pneumonia)...
- Fever
  A mild fever up to 39°C can actually help the immune system to get rid of an infection.

- Immunisation history statements for children
  By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria.

- Infection risk - cardiac surgery and mycobacteria
  Mycobacterium chimaera is a type of bacterium known as a non-tuberculous mycobacterium (NTM). There is a risk that heater cooler units (HCUs) used in cardiac (heart) surgery may be contaminated with.

- Infections – bacterial and viral
  Many bacterial infections can be treated with antibiotics, but they are useless against viral infections.

- Who provides immunisations in Victoria
  Immunisations in Victoria are provided by local councils, GPs and specially qualified nurses in medical clinics and community health services, some Maternal and Child Health nurses, travel clinics and.

Preventing infections

- Antibacterial cleaning products
  The Western obsession with cleanliness may be partly responsible for the increase in allergic asthma and conditions such as rhinitis.

- Beat the Bite! Mosquito-borne disease risk and management (video)
  Dr Finn Romanes, public health doctor at Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services explains the department’s program to monitor and manage the risks associated with Mosquitoes. Learn about the.

- Food safety while travelling
  Travelling, eating and drinking go together but unfortunately, traveller's diarrhoea and other food-related illnesses can sometimes come along for the ride.

- Handwashing - why it's important
  Washing your hands with soap and warm water can help prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

- Home tattooing
  Home tattooing, or getting tattoos overseas, puts you at risk of serious complications that can be debilitating and life-long.

- Immunisation history statements for children
  By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria.

- Kissing and your health
  While disease-causing bugs can be transferred during a kiss, most won't cause disease and the risk of serious disease is very small.

- Personal hygiene
  Good personal hygiene is one of the most effective ways to protect ourselves and others from illness.

- Pets – safe handling of reptiles and tropical fish
  People in contact with tropical fish and reptiles such as turtles, lizards and snakes may be at risk of infections and illness due to germs (such as bacteria, viruses and parasites) carried on the.

- Piercings
  If you want to have your body pierced, choose an experienced, registered practitioner to reduce the risks of infection and scarring.

- Preventing healthcare associated infection (HAI)
  There are things you can do to reduce the chance of getting an infection while you are in hospital.

- Quarantine at home - coping tips
  You may be asked to quarantine yourself at home if you have developed, or been exposed to, an infectious disease.

- Tattoos
  If you want to get a tattoo, choose an experienced, registered practitioner to reduce the risks of infection and scarring.

- Time to immunise - free vaccines for men who have sex with men
Immunisation is one of the best ways you can protect yourself and others from infectious diseases in our community. In partnership with Thorne Harbour Health (formerly Victorian AIDS Council), the...

Travel health and safety tips (slideshow)

We all love travelling to new and exotic places, but unfortunately illnesses and unforeseen events can ruin the trip of a lifetime. With a little effort, take a few of these simple precautions to make...

Travel immunisation

If you are travelling overseas, check with your doctor well in advance to find out what immunisations you need...

Vaccines

Vaccines trick the body into building immunity against infectious diseases without causing the actual disease...

Who provides immunisations in Victoria

Immunisations in Victoria are provided by local councils, GPs and specially qualified nurses in medical clinics and community health services, some Maternal and Child Health nurses, travel clinics and...

Workplace safety - infection control

The spread of many pathogens in the workplace can be prevented with regular hand washing...

Managing infections

- Antibiotic resistant bacteria
  Careful prescribing of antibiotics will minimise the emergence of antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria...

- Handwashing - why it's important
  Washing your hands with soap and warm water can help prevent the spread of infectious diseases...

- Medicines and side effects
  Complementary medicines can interact with pharmaceutical medicines...

- Medicines - safety issues
  Make sure your doctor knows about every medicine you take, including vitamins...

- Preventing healthcare associated infection (HAI)
  There are things you can do to reduce the chance of getting an infection while you are in hospital...

- Quarantine at home - coping tips
  You may be asked to quarantine yourself at home if you have developed, or been exposed to, an infectious disease...

- Workplace safety - infection control
  The spread of many pathogens in the workplace can be prevented with regular hand washing...

Childhood infections

- Beat the Bite
  Beat the Bite is a Victorian government health campaign to highlight awareness of the risk of mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria. Find resources to be printed and shared along with videos that tell...

- Boils
  Some areas of the body are more susceptible to boils, including the face, throat, armpits, groin and buttocks...

- Chickenpox
  Chickenpox is highly contagious, but it is generally mild and gets better without the need for special treatment...

- Croup
  Croup is a viral infection of the throat and windpipe that causes noisy breathing, a hoarse voice and a harsh, barking cough...

- Diphtheria
  Diphtheria is a serious bacterial disease that causes severe inflammation of the nose, throat and windpipe...

- Fever - children
  Fever is a way in which the body fights infection. A fever is not dangerous and does not always indicate a serious illness...
- Fever - febrile convulsions
  A febrile convulsion is a fit that occurs in children when they have a high fever...

- Gastroenteritis in children
  Gastroenteritis or Gastro can be dangerous for very young babies. Gastro is common in young children and spreads easily. Gastro is a bowel infection which causes diarrhoea (runny or watery poo) and...

- Hand, foot and mouth disease
  Good personal hygiene is essential to prevent the spread of hand, foot and mouth disease to others, both for those infected and their carers...

- Impetigo - school sores
  Impetigo, or school sores, is a highly contagious skin infection that commonly affects school-aged children...

- Measles
  Measles can cause serious and sometimes fatal complications, including pneumonia and brain inflammation...

- Measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chickenpox) – immunisation
  Immunisation is the best protection against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella (chickenpox)...

- Melissa's story (video)
  Melissa shares her story of how her baby caught chickenpox at 5 weeks old...

- Meningitis
  Meningitis can cause death and requires urgent medical attention...

- Middle ear infections
  Middle ear infections often happen during or after a child has a cold...

- Mumps
  Mumps is a viral illness that causes fever and swollen salivary glands, and a swollen face...

- Roseola infantum
  Roseola is a mild viral infection with associated fever and rash that affects babies and young children...

- Rubella
  Rubella is a mild illness for most people, but very dangerous for pregnant women and their babies...

- Slapped cheek disease
  Children with slapped cheek do not need to be kept home from school or day care, as cases are only contagious before the onset of the rash...

- Streptococcal infection – group B
  Group B streptococcal bacteria can cause a wide range of illnesses in susceptible people including newborns, the elderly and those with pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes or cancer. Out...

- Viral encephalitis
  Viral encephalitis is inflammation of the brain caused by a virus and can cause permanent brain damage...

- Whooping cough
  The major symptom of whooping cough is a severe cough, which is often followed by a 'whooping' sound...

- Whooping cough – a family’s experience (video)
  A family shares their experience when their baby daughter contracted whooping cough (or pertussis).
Barmah Forest virus (BFV) disease can cause joint inflammation and pain, fatigue and a rash of variable appearance. A full recovery can be expected. Most people recover completely within six months.

- **Beat the Bite**
  
  Beat the Bite is a Victorian government health campaign to highlight awareness of the risk of mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria. Find resources to be printed and shared along with videos that tell...

- **Beat the Bite! Mosquito-borne disease risk and management (video)**
  
  Dr Finni Romanes, public health doctor at Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services explains the department’s program to monitor and manage the risks associated with Mosquitoes. Learn about the...

- **Bird flu (avian influenza)**
  
  The symptoms of bird flu in humans are similar to those of regular influenza.

- **Dengue virus disease**
  
  Dengue virus disease (dengue fever, or ‘dengue’) is a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes in many tropical and subtropical parts of the world.

- **Hendra virus**
  
  The best defence against Hendra virus is to avoid contact with an infected horse.

- **Leptospirosis**
  
  Leptospirosis is a disease spread from animals to humans, caused by infection with the bacteria Leptospira.

- **Malaria**
  
  Travellers who visit malarial locations should avoid mosquito bites and take anti-malarial drugs.

- **Mosquitoes can carry diseases**
  
  You can reduce the risk of mosquito bites if you get rid of potential mosquito breeding sites around your home.

- **Murray Valley encephalitis**
  
  The only protection from Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE) is to avoid mosquito bites.

- **Pets – safe handling of reptiles and tropical fish**
  
  People in contact with tropical fish and reptiles such as turtles, lizards and snakes may be at risk of infections and illness due to germs (such as bacteria, viruses and parasites) carried on the...

- **Pinworms**
  
  Despite the unsavoury reputation, a pinworms infection (worms) is relatively harmless and easily treated.

- **Psittacosis - parrot fever**
  
  People who have birds as pets, poultry workers and anyone working in aviaries or pet shops, are most at risk of catching psittacosis.

- **Q fever**
  
  Q fever is caused by a micro-organism that can be carried by cattle, sheep and goats.

- **Ross River virus disease**
  
  Most people recover from Ross River virus disease, although some people have symptoms for a year or more.

- **Tapeworms and hydatid disease**
  
  It's important for your own health to control tapeworm infection in your dog.

- **Toxoplasmosis**
  
  Problems only occur if a woman becomes infected with parasites that cause toxoplasmosis for the first time while pregnant.

- **West Nile virus**
  
  All disease-carrying mosquitoes breed in water or require water to enable eggs to hatch.

- **Zika virus**
  
  Zika virus is a mosquito-borne virus. There is no cure, specific treatment or vaccine for Zika virus.

**A-Z of infectious disorders**

- **Astraus**

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Anthrax is a rare but potentially fatal bacterial disease that occasionally infects humans.

- **Aspergillus**
  Aspergillus is a fungus that commonly grows on rotting vegetation. It can cause asthma symptoms.

- **Australian bat lyssavirus (AHLV)**
  The simplest form of prevention for lyssavirus is to avoid close contact with bats.

- **Bacterial vaginosis**
  Bacterial vaginosis (BV) is caused by an imbalance of the bacteria normally present in the vagina.

- **Barmah Forest virus disease**
  Barmah Forest virus (BFV) disease can cause joint inflammation and pain, fatigue and a rash of variable appearance. A full recovery can be expected. Most people recover completely within six months.

- **Beat the Bite**
  Beat the Bite is a Victorian government health campaign to highlight awareness of the risk of mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria. Find resources to be printed and shared along with videos that tell...

- **Bite and stings – first aid**
  If you are bitten or stung by an insect or animal, apply first aid and seek medical treatment as soon as possible.

- **Boils**
  Some areas of the body are more susceptible to boils, including the face, throat, armpits, groin and buttocks.

- **Botulism**
  Botulism is considered a medical emergency. If untreated, it may cause death.

- **Burmese ulcer**
  Since the ulcer gets bigger with time, early diagnosis and prompt treatment of Bairnsdale disease can keep skin loss to a minimum.

- **Candida auris (C. auris)**
  Candida is a genus of fungi (yeasts) that live on the skin and inside the human body. Candida auris (also called C. auris) is an uncommon fungus that can cause serious infections.

- **Cellulitis**
  Cellulitis is a bacterial infection of the skin that occurs most commonly on the lower legs and in areas where the skin is damaged or inflamed.

- **Chest infections**
  A chest infection affects your lungs, either in the larger airways (bronchiitis) or in the smaller air sacs (pneumonia).

- **Chickenpox**
  Chickenpox is highly contagious, but it is generally mild and gets better without the need for special treatment.

- **Chlamydia**
  Chlamydia is often called the 'silent infection' because most people do not realise they have it.

- **Colds**
  Cold viruses are spread by sneezing, coughing and hand contact.

- **Cold sores**
  Cold sores are blisters around the mouth and nose, caused by the herpes simplex virus.

- **Coughing and wheezing in children**

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Coughing and wheezing in babies can be distressing for you and your baby, but in most cases symptoms can be relieved at home...

- **Croup**
  Croup is a viral infection of the throat and windpipe that causes noisy breathing, a hoarse voice and a harsh, barking cough.

- **Cystitis**
  Cystitis is the most common urinary tract infection in women.

- **Cytomegalovirus (CMV)**
  If an unborn baby gets CMV from their mother, it can cause hearing loss and intellectual disability.

- **Dengue virus disease**
  Dengue virus disease (dengue fever, or ‘dengue’) is a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes in many tropical and subtropical parts of the world.

- **Diarrhoea**
  Acute diarrhoea in babies and young children can be life threatening.

- **Diphtheria**
  Diphtheria is a serious bacterial disease that causes severe inflammation of the nose, throat and windpipe.

- **Ebola virus disease (EVD)**
  Ebola virus is a rare disease that can cause severe symptoms and can be life-threatening.

- **Epididymitis**
  Epididymitis is an infection that causes inflammation of the epididymis.

- **Eyes - trachoma**
  A clean face and clean environment are the best protection against trachoma.

- **Fatigue fighting tips**
  Activity and nutrition help fight fatigue and put more energy into your daily life.

- **Fever - children**
  Fever is a way in which the body fights infection. A fever is not dangerous and does not always indicate a serious illness.

- **Fever - febrile convulsions**
  A febrile convulsion is a fit that occurs in children when they have a high fever.

- **Flu (influenza)**
  Influenza (the flu) is caused by a virus. The flu is more than just a bad cold and can occasionally lead to serious complications, including death. Specific antiviral medication is available. It is...

- **Food poisoning - listeria**
  Listeria infection is uncommon but very dangerous for the elderly, people whose immune systems are not working properly and pregnant women and their unborn babies.

- **Gastroenteritis**
  It is important to establish the cause of gastro, as different types of gastroenteritis respond to different treatments.

- **Gastroenteritis - amoebiasis**
  Amoebiasis can cause diarrhoea among travellers to developing countries.

- **Gastroenteritis - campylobacteriosis**
  Campylobacteriosis is a type of gastroenteritis and is more common in children under five years of age and young adults.

- **Gastroenteritis - cryptosporidiosis**
  Outbreaks of cryptosporidiosis have been associated with child care centres, public swimming pools and contaminated water supplies.

- **Gastroenteritis - giardiasis**
  Most people infected with Giardia parasites do not develop symptoms but can still spread the infection to others.

- **Gastroenteritis in children**
Gastroenteritis or Gastro can be dangerous for very young babies. Gastro is common in young children and spreads easily. Gastro is a bowel infection which causes diarrhoea (runny or watery poo) and...

- Gastroenteritis - salmonellosis
  You may be more prone to salmonellosis if you are elderly, have another medical condition (such as a weakened immune system) or are malnourished...

- Gastroenteritis - shigella
  Outbreaks of shigella gastroenteritis can occur in institutional settings, particularly where children are still in nappies or adults are incontinent...

- Genital herpes
  Many people with genital herpes are not aware that they have the infection, because they have no symptoms...

- Genital warts
  Genital warts are one of the most common sexually transmissible infections...

- Glandular fever
  Glandular fever is most common among high school and university students, but young children can also become infected by saliva on toys, shared cups, or the hands of carers...

- Genital herpes
  Genital herpes, also spelt gonorrhea, affects both men and women and is transmitted during sex, it may lead to infertility in women if left untreated...

- Haemolytic uraemic syndrome
  Haemolytic uraemic syndrome (HUS) is a rare condition which can lead to chronic kidney damage or death from kidney failure...

- Heart conditions - endocarditis
  Endocarditis is an infection of the heart valves or the inner lining of the heart...

- Hendra virus
  The best defence against Hendra virus is to avoid contact with an infected horse...

- Hepatitis
  Hepatitis is an umbrella term for several diseases that affect the liver...

- Hepatitis A
  Immunisation is the best protection against hepatitis A infection and it is recommended for people in high-risk groups...

- Hepatitis B
  Hepatitis B is a viral infection that affects the liver and can lead to serious illness or death...

- Hepatitis C
  In Australia, hepatitis C is most often spread through the sharing of unsterile drug injecting equipment. New all oral combination treatment has greatly improved health outcomes for people with...

- Hepatitis C Cure - what it means for Victorians (video)
  Hepatitis C Cure - what it means for Victorians...

- HIV
  In Australia, HIV is most commonly spread when having sex without a condom and when sharing needles and other injecting equipment...

- Impetigo - school sores
  Impetigo, or school sores, is a highly contagious skin infection that commonly affects school-aged children...

- Labyrinthitis and vestibular neuritis
  Labyrinthitis and vestibular neuritis are disorders that result in inflammation of the inner ear and the nerve connecting the inner ear to the brain...

- Legionnaires' disease
  Legionnaires' disease is a rare form of pneumonia...

- Leprosy (Hansen’s disease)
  Once a person with leprosy begins treatment they quickly become non-infectious...

- Leptospirosis
Leptospirosis is a disease spread from animals to humans, caused by infection with the bacteria Leptospira.

- **Malaria**
  Travellers who visit malarial locations should avoid mosquito bites and take anti-malarial drugs.

- **Measles**
  Measles can cause serious and sometimes fatal complications, including pneumonia and brain inflammation.

- **Meningitis**
  Meningitis can cause death and requires urgent medical attention.

- **Meningococcal disease**
  Do not leave young adults alone if they suddenly develop a fever because they may become seriously ill very quickly.

- **Molluscum contagiosum**
  Molluscum contagiosum can be mistaken for genital warts or pimples, check with your doctor for an accurate diagnosis.

- **Mosquitoes can carry diseases**
  You can reduce the risk of mosquito bites if you get rid of potential mosquito breeding sites around your home.

- **Mumps**
  Mumps is a viral illness that causes fever and swollen salivary glands, and a swollen face.

- **Murray Valley encephalitis**
  The only protection from Murray Valley encephalitis (MVE) is to avoid mosquito bites.

- **New drugs for the treatment of hepatitis C – Frequently Asked Questions for patients**
  In Australia, hepatitis C is most often spread through the sharing of unsterile drug injecting equipment. New all oral combination treatment has greatly improved health outcomes for people with.

- **Osteomyelitis**
  Osteomyelitis means an infection of bone which can either be recent or longstanding.

- **Parechovirus**
  Good personal hygiene is essential to prevent the spread of parechovirus to others, both for those infected and their carers.

- **Pericarditis**
  Pericarditis symptoms may be similar to those of heart attack and include chest pain and abnormal heart rhythms.

- **Pets – safe handling of reptiles and tropical fish**
  People in contact with tropical fish and reptiles such as turtles, lizards and snakes may be at risk of infections and illness due to germs (such as bacteria, viruses and parasites) carried on the.

- **Pinworms**
  Despite the unsavoury reputation, a pinworm infection (worms) is relatively harmless and easily treated.

- **Pleurisy**
  Treating any infection of the upper respiratory tract quickly will reduce the risk of developing pleurisy.

- **Pneumococcal disease**
  Pneumococcal disease is a leading cause of serious illness and death in young children.

- **Pneumonia**
  Anyone can get pneumonia, but young children and the elderly are most susceptible.

- **Polio and post-polio syndrome**
  Polio is a serious disease that can cause life-threatening paralysis and possibly death.

- **Psittacosis - parrot fever**
  People who have birds as pets, poultry workers and anyone working in aviaries or pet shops, are most at risk of catching psittacosis.
- Q fever
  Q fever is caused by a micro-organism that can be carried by cattle, sheep and goats.
- Reactive arthritis
  Reactive arthritis is a form of arthritis that occurs as a result of some bacterial infections.
- Rheumatic fever
  Untreated rheumatic fever can lead to serious complications such as rheumatic heart disease.
- Roseola infantum
  Roseola is a mild viral infection with associated fever and rash that affects babies and young children.
- Ross River virus disease
  Most people recover from Ross River virus disease, although some people have symptoms for a year or more.
- Rotavirus
  Rotavirus is a common cause of viral gastroenteritis for Australian babies and preschool children.
- Rubella
  Rubella is a mild illness for most people, but very dangerous for pregnant women and their babies.
- Salpingitis
  Salpingitis is one of the most common causes of female infertility and may permanently damage the fallopian tubes.
- Septicaemia
  Bacteria in the bowels, urinary tract, mouth and skin can cause disease if they get into the bloodstream.
- Shiga toxin-producing E.coli
  There are many types of E.coli bacteria, most of which are harmless. However, some types of E.coli produce toxins (poisons) that can cause gastroenteritis (gastro). One of these types of E.coli is...
- Shingles
  Shingles is caused by the same virus responsible for chickenpox.
- Slapped cheek disease
  Children with slapped cheek do not need to be kept home from school or day care, as cases are only contagious before the onset of the rash.
- Smallpox
  Smallpox was once a feared and highly contagious viral disease.
- Staphylococcus aureus - golden staph
  Hospital patients are more likely to be infected by golden staph because of surgical or other wounds.
- Streptococcal infection - group A
  Streptococcal infection - group A can cause sore throats (pharyngitis), scarlet fever or impetigo (school sores).
- Streptococcal infection – group B
  Group B streptococcal bacteria can cause a wide range of illnesses in susceptible people including newborns, the elderly and those with pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes or cancer. Out...
- Styes
  Styes may be red and sore, but they generally do not cause any damage to the eye or eyelids.
- Swimmer's ear
  Swimmer's ear can be triggered by exposure to water or mechanical damage due to overzealous cleaning.
- Tapeworms and hydatid disease
  It's important for your own health to control tapeworm infection in your dog.
- Tetanus
  Tetanus is a life-threatening disease and immunisation is the best way to reduce your risk.
• Time to immunise - free vaccines for men who have sex with men
Immunisation is one of the best ways you can protect yourself and others from infectious diseases in our community. In partnership with Thorne Harbour Health (formerly Victorian AIDS Council), the...

• Tinea
Tinea is contagious and can be spread by skin-to-skin contact or indirectly through towels, clothes or floors...

• Toxic shock syndrome (TSS)
If you think you could have toxic shock syndrome, stop using tampons immediately and go to the emergency department of your nearest hospital...

• Toxoplasmosis
Problems only occur if a woman becomes infected with parasites that cause toxoplasmosis for the first time while pregnant...

• Travel health - yellow fever immunisation
If you are travelling or passing through areas infected with yellow fever, some countries require you to be vaccinated...

• Tuberculosis (TB)
Tuberculosis is spread when a person with an active infection coughs, laughs, sneezes or sings...

• Urinary tract infections (UTI)
Urinary tract infections (UTI) can target the urethra, bladder or kidneys...

• Vaginal thrush
Vaginal thrush is a common infection caused by an overgrowth of yeasts in the vagina...

• Viral encephalitis
Viral encephalitis is inflammation of the brain caused by a virus and can cause permanent brain damage...

• Viral haemorrhagic fever
Viral haemorrhagic fever (VHF) is an extremely infectious and life threatening disease caused by a group of viruses, including the Ebola virus...

• Warts
Warts can be stubborn, so you may need to use more than one type of treatment...

• West Nile virus
All disease-carrying mosquitoes breed in water or require water to enable eggs to hatch...

• Whooping cough
The major symptom of whooping cough is a severe cough, which is often followed by a 'whooping' sound...

• Whooping cough – a family’s experience (video)
A family shares their experience when their baby daughter contracted whooping cough (or pertussis)...

• Williams syndrome
Williams syndrome often goes undiagnosed, which means that some people with the disorder fail to get the support and treatment they need until later in life...

• Zika virus
Zika virus is a mosquito-borne virus. There is no cure, specific treatment or vaccine for Zika virus...

Related Information

• Bird flu (avian influenza)
The symptoms of bird flu in humans are similar to those of regular influenza...

• Flu (influenza)
Influenza (the flu) is caused by a virus. The flu is more than just a bad cold and can occasionally lead to serious complications, including death. Specific antiviral medication is available. It is...

• Asthma management
An asthma action plan can help you take control of your asthma and feel confident managing it...

• Impetigo - school sores
Impetigo, or school sores, is a highly contagious skin infection that commonly affects school-aged children.

- Chickenpox

Chickenpox is highly contagious, but it is generally mild and gets better without the need for special treatment.

Related information on other websites

- The Children's Hospital at Westmead - Parents - Slapped cheek disease or fifth disease.

Content Partner

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by: Sinclair Dermatology

Last updated: April 2018

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