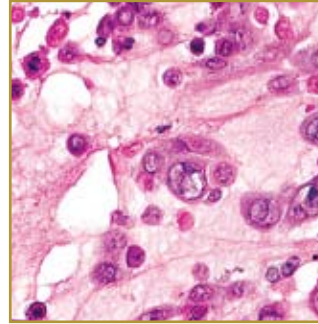


## VARICELLA



**EPIDEMIOLOGY:** Occurrence worldwide, significant decrease in the United States after the vaccine was presented in 1995

**ETIOLOGY:** Varicella-zoster virus (VZV)

**PATHOGENESIS:** VZV enters the body through the respiratory tract and conjunctiva, primary viremia occurs 4-6 days after infection, virus spreads throughout the body prior to the rash occurring

**CLINICAL:** Generalized pruritic rash progressing rapidly from macules to papules to vesicular lesions prior to crusting

**HISTOLOGY:** Intraepidermal vesiculation that results from ballooning and acantholysis

**VARICELLA**, commonly known as Chickenpox, is an infectious disease caused by the varicella zoster virus. Varicella is a common virus among children under the age of 12, but can also affect adults. An intense pruritic rash that progresses rapidly from macules to papules to vesicular lesions before crusting at about six days and completely healed in around 16 days characterizes the virus. The rash usually begins to appear on the head and the trunk then spreads throughout the body. The infection is highly contagious and can be spread by direct contact, droplet transmission and airborne transmission. Once an individual has caught varicella, the virus remains in the body for a lifetime, controlled by the immune system. In most cases, a child's immune system will fight the infection off. Treatments are recommended to relieve the intense pruritus including oatmeal baths in lukewarm water, oral antihistamines and topical lotions. Healthcare providers may also recommend trimming the fingernails to reduce cause of infection and scarring.

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