

February 12, 2026

Public Announcement

Chickenpox (Varicella) Case in Chambers, Arizona and Exposure at Middle School & Local Basketball Game

FORT DEFIANCE, AZ – Fort Defiance Indian Hospital Board (FDIHB) has received information of a confirmed varicella (Chickenpox) case in Chambers, Arizona.

People who were in the following locations on the dates below may have been exposed:

Exposure Location(s)	Exposure Date(s)	Watch for Symptoms Until
Sanders Middle School (Sanders, AZ)	February 3-6, 2026	February 27, 2026
Ganado Middle School Basketball Game (Ganado, AZ)	February 4, 2026	February 25, 2026

What is Varicella (chickenpox): Varicella (chickenpox) is a highly contagious viral disease that causes a blister-like rash, itching, tiredness and fever. Chickenpox can have serious complications in babies, pregnant people who are not protected, and people with weak immune systems who are not protected. However, most people are protected. People who have previously had chickenpox, adults born before 1980, and individuals who have had 2 doses of the varicella vaccine are protected and at very low risk.

What to do if you or your child was exposed to a confirmed chickenpox case: Individuals who were exposed AND meet one of the following criteria should contact their healthcare provider because receiving the vaccine within 5 days or immune globulin within 10 days after the exposure can prevent illness.

- Children who are not up-to-date on their varicella vaccine (1 dose due at 12 months, the 2nd dose due at 4 years)
- Individuals with severely weak immune systems (e.g., have had an organ transplant) who have not had 2 varicella vaccines or had chickenpox or shingles in the past
- Adults born after 1980 who have not had 2 doses of the varicella vaccine, a lab test showing immunity or a history of chicken pox or shingles
- Anyone who develops varicella symptoms should stay home and seek medical attention if symptoms become severe. Symptoms usually develop 8 to 21 days after an exposure.
- If you seek medical attention, call ahead and let them know you have been exposed to chickenpox before entering the building.

How to Prevent Varicella: The best way to prevent varicella (chickenpox) is to be vaccinated with a varicella-containing vaccine. During a varicella (chickenpox) outbreak it is important that all children who do not have a medical contraindication receive their first dose of the varicella vaccine at 12 months and the second dose at age 4. Talk to your healthcare provider to make sure you and your family are up to date on vaccines. Vaccines are provided at Tséhootsooí Medical Center Primary Care Clinic 928.729.8032 and Pediatric Clinic 928.729.8710

For more information about Varicella (chickenpox) visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/chickenpox/about/index.html> For updates and changes, please look at our Facebook or Instagram pages.

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