



April 6, 2026

Public Announcement

Tséhootsooí Medical Center Confirms Chickenpox (Varicella) Exposure, St. Michaels, AZ

ST. MICHAELS, AZ – Fort Defiance Indian Hospital Board (FDIHB) has confirmed that a person has tested positive for varicella (chickenpox). FDIHB is working with local partners to notify individuals who have potentially been exposed. Individuals who were at the location at the dates listed below may have been exposed and should monitor for any signs or symptoms of illness.

Location	Exposure Date	Watch for Symptoms Until
St. Michaels Indian School (St Michaels, AZ)	March 30 & 31, 2026	April 21, 2026

What is Varicella (chickenpox): Varicella (chickenpox) is a highly contagious viral disease. Symptoms include: high fever, cough, blister-like rash, itching, tiredness, and runny nose. It can lead to serious complications in unprotected babies, pregnant individuals, and those with weak immune systems.

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 chickenpox (varicella) is through vaccination. Children should receive their first dose at 12 months and the second at age 4, unless medically contraindicated. Check with your healthcare provider to ensure vaccinations are up to date. Vaccines are available 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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