

STEP BY STEP



TO EFFECTIVE PARENTING

**CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES AND
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

By Ruby M. Johnston and Dr. Roman Corninka

About Step by Step

Parenting is both an exciting and challenging journey. Having a child to love, nurture, and encourage is a blessing. However the journey is filled with challenges which are sometimes puzzling and at other times frustrating. This booklet and others in the series are designed to help you sort through the steps in helping a child grow and develop to reach her fullest potential.

Each booklet contains core information on parenting attitudes, skills and abilities. There are activities to work through to help in applying each strategy. While the booklets contain information which can lead to more effective parenting, it may not answer all the questions a parent might have in the area presented. It is therefore recommended that each and every parent join the thousands of other parents in the journey for lifelong learning. Parenting is a step by step learning process.

We invite you to read all our titles and join us in one of our many different training sessions. We look forward to walking together with you step by step to effective parenting!

Sincerely,

Ruby M. Johnston

President, International Leadership and Development Center

Founder, LAMb International

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CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

CHILDREN AND ILLNESSES

Being a parent goes hand in hand with childhood illnesses. Some illnesses are life threatening and it is critical for parents to recognize the signs of illness and be able to categorize them into priorities and to know different methods of helping a child who is suffering from an illness. Since children play in such close contact with one another, it is also important to know which diseases are communicable and which are not. In this STEP BY STEP booklet, we will look at many different childhood diseases, but certainly not exhaust the list. There are others and it is important for parents to continue learning about their child's health.

The next few pages of this guide contain the following:

- The Different Categories of Illnesses
- Common Communicable Diseases
- Childhood Immunizations
- Additional STEP-BY-STEP topics and titles.



DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF ILLNESS

CATEGORY 1 – EMERGENCY

This category of illness has signs that could be life threatening to the child. If any of these signs exist, get the child to emergency immediately. These signs include:

- Severe coughing, high pitched whistling sound, redness or blueness of face, difficulty breathing.
- Vomiting with other signs, such as headache or fever.
- Fever more than 101°F (38.3°C), extreme tiredness, difficult to wake.
- Sore throat, difficulty breathing and swallowing.

CATEGORY 2 – SEE A DOCTOR SOON

The signs you see here are cause to be concerned about a communicable illness. The child should see a doctor and be isolated from other children until a medical assessment has been done. Signs for this category include:

- Redness, swelling, drainage of eyes.
- Unusual spots/rashes with fever or itching.
- Sore throat.
- Crusty, bright yellow, gummy skin sores.
- Diarrhea (with more than two loose stools a day)
- Vomiting (more than two times a day)
- Yellow skin and white of eyes.
- Clay colored stools or tea colored urine.

CATEGORY 3 – WATCH CHILD CLOSELY

This category has signs that indicate a possible communicable illness. The child should be watched closely and a doctor seen if signs persist or worsen. The signs to watch for in this category are:

- Earache, check for fever or discharge in the ears.
- Headache.
- Itching of scalp – check for nits and lice. If present isolate until treated.
- Fever less than 101°F (38.3° C).
- Runny nose – check color and smell. If yellow discharge or odor, check temperature.
- Unusual behavior.



COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Communicable diseases are infections which can be spread from person to person. There are three periods of time that are important to know about communicable diseases. These are:

- Incubation period: This is the period of time that it takes for symptoms to develop after a person is exposed to an infection.
- Period of communicability: This is the period of time during which the infection is known to be able to be transmitted for one person to another.
- Exclusion period: This is the period of time in which children should be isolated from others to ensure they do not pass along an infection.



COMMON DISEASES IN CHILDREN

The following diseases are common to children. Many of these are communicable. Parents need to be aware of them, as well as their symptoms and treatments. This list is to help you identify a problem. It is always important for parents to isolate the child from other children and to contact a doctor when a child is suffering with a disease that is communicable.

Candidiasis (Oral Thrush)

This is a yeast infection of the mouth. It is a benign condition which occurs during infancy. It is characterized by white patches in the mouth which cannot easily be removed. It is usually treated with an oral antibiotic.

- Incubation period – none.
- Period of communicability – none.
- Exclusion period – none.

Ascaris (Round Worm)

This is a round, 6 to 10 inch (15-25 cm), pale, pink worm – resembles appearance of earthworms. Symptoms are variable, mild and almost absent. The first recognized sign of infection is live worms passed in stools or sometimes vomited. Preschool children are more frequently infected than older children. Infestations occur by ingesting contaminated soil containing the eggs. Raw foods are the common vehicle of transmission. Worms should be saved for identification by the doctor. Medicinal treatment is necessary to get rid of this infection.

- Incubation period – Worms reach maturity 2 months after ingestion of eggs.

- Period of communicability – none.
- Exclusion period – no person to person spread, therefore no exclusion is necessary.

Hib (Influenza Type B)

This is a particularly virulent bacteria which is treatable with antibiotics. This is not the same germ that causes winter “flu” symptoms. Hib can be the cause of other severe infections, including infections in bones and joints, lungs, skin and the heart. At highest risk are children 6 to 7 months of age. There is a vaccine currently available to prevent Hib diseases. Unfortunately, the vaccine is not effective in the group at most risk for Hib diseases, those children under 18 months of age. The vaccine is considered to be one of the safest vaccines on the market. It is generally recommended that all children should receive Hib vaccines at age 24 months with special attention given to children attending day care centers.

Candidiasis (Monilia)

This is characterized by a diaper rash of more than 3 days duration. The skin appears beet red and has an oozing, wet look and may have tiny bumps. It will often have a complicating yeast infection. It is recommended that a doctor is consulted for treatment.

- Incubation period – variable.
- Period of communicability – limited susceptibility.
- Exclusion period – no exclusion necessary. Good hand washing will prevent spread.

Varicella (Chicken Pox)

The most noticeable symptoms are pimple-like eruptions on the body and face. The base of pimple is red with raised yellow blister on top. Other symptoms include headache and fever.

- Incubation period – 2 weeks.

- Period of communicability – lasts until all blistered or vesicles are dried up.
- Exclusion period – until all blisters or vesicles are dried up.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Conjunctivitis is usually caused by a virus, but may be a bacterial infection. Bacterial infection is characterized by redness over white part of the eye with a yellowish, heavy discharge, particularly in the morning. This can be painful or cause itching and sometimes swelling of the lid.

- Incubation period – none.
- Period of communicability – until discharge has stopped.
- Exclusion period – until day after treatment is initiated (24 hours on medication) or free of discharge.

Diphtheria

Symptoms of diphtheria include sore throat, vomiting, fever, headache, with a rash that appears after approximately 2 days. This rash usually appears on the warm, moist part of the body, such as sides or chest, groin and back, and has the appearance of a red flush.

- Incubation period – 2-6 days.
- Period of communicability – 2 weeks.
- Exclusion period – determined by throat culture.

Fifth's Disease

A mild, viral condition characterized by a striking redness of the cheeks (like slapped cheeks). This is followed by a lace like rash on the trunk and upper parts of the arms and legs. There is usually no fever associated with this disease. It is most common among elementary school age children.

- Incubation period – 2 weeks.

- Period of communicability – 1 to 2 days before and after onset of rash.
- Exclusion period – none necessary.

Gastroenteritis

The classical syndrome includes combinations of the following symptoms: nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramps and diarrhea. The cause may be any number of bacterial or viral agents.

- Incubation period – variable, but usually 6 – 72 hours.
- Period of communicability – variable, depending on cause.
- Exclusion period – Children with significant symptoms of diarrhea or repeated vomiting should be excluded until they are well. If caused by bacteria or parasites, the child should be excluded until stool cultures are negative or authorized by child's doctor.

Hepatitis A

The symptoms of Hepatitis A include: Fever, stomach-upset, loss of appetite, nausea followed within a few days by jaundice. Most cases of Hepatitis A among children are either asymptomatic or so mild that they seldom develop jaundice. Consequently, they are seldom clinically diagnosed.

- Incubation period – averages 28-30 days.
- Period of communicability – last half of incubation period and continues approximately 1 week after appearance of symptoms.
- Exclusion period – 14 days after onset of jaundice. All contacts should be referred to physician for probable treatment.

Pin Worm

Pin worm infection is caused by ingesting the eggs of pinworms from infected surfaces. The primary symptom is rectal itching, and can be accompanied by disturbed sleep and irritability. This is not an extremely serious infection, but should be treated. Notice to others whom the child has been in contact with is suggested.

- Incubation period – none
- Period of communicability – while worms are present. Eggs can live approximately 2 weeks.
- Exclusion period – none, so long as there is good hand washing, including under fingernails.

Rubella (Measles – 7 Day)

Rubella first appears with cold-like symptoms including: red and watery eyes, and a hard, dry cough. Around the fourth day, a rash appears accompanied by fever. Your child should be medically evaluated to substantiate diagnosis.

- Incubation period – 10 days.
- Period of communicability – 4 days before and 5 days after rash appears.
- Exclusion period – 7 days after rash appears.

Impetigo

Impetigo appears like a simple pimple which then becomes scabbed or crusted with a honey-colored discharge, most commonly on the face.

- Incubation period – 2 -5 days.
- Period of communicability – as long as lesions are present.
- Exclusion period – determined by physician.

Meningitis

The symptoms of meningitis are fever, intense headache, stiff neck, nausea and often vomiting. This may be accompanied by a rash, which it appears as small, purple spots.

- Incubation period – 10 days.
- Period of communicability – as long as agent is carried.
- Exclusion period – check with physician.

Lice

Lice are very small, grayish-white colored insects. Lice do not have wings and cannot fly. Diagnosis is usually made on the basis of finding their eggs, known as nits, attached to the shaft of the hair close to the scalp. Nits are teardrop in shape, about the same size and may vary in color from yellowish brown to white. Infestation usually causes itching.

- Incubation period – immediately.
- Period of communicability – while lice are present.
- Exclusion period – until after an initial treatment and complete change of clothing, bedding, etc.

Mumps

The classic symptom of Mumps is the swelling of the salivary glands, particularly those glands located within your cheek, near your jaw line, below your ears. The swelling is accompanied by fever, headache, muscle aches, tiredness and loss of appetite. These symptoms may last for several days. While there currently is no treatment for Mumps, there is a vaccine which can prevent the infection from occurring.

- Incubation period – 2 to 4 weeks.
- Period of communicability – 1 week before and during swelling.
- Exclusion period – 7 days following onset of swelling.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough)

This disease may first appear as a common cold with a cough for the first week. The child will then develop long spells of coughing – 8 to 10 times per breath – and may end up gagging and vomiting. The cough develops a “whoop” characteristic. This disease can last for several weeks.

- Incubation period – 1 to 3 weeks.
- Period of communicability – 3 weeks after development of symptoms.
- Exclusion period – determined by doctor.

Ringworm

Ringworm is characterized by round patches of scaly skin in which hair is broken off at the scalp, most commonly a small thumb print size patch. It is also commonly found on the body.

- Incubation period – unknown.
- Period of communicability – unknown.
- Exclusion period – determined by a doctor – usually 24 hours after the child receives treatment.

Roseola

Roseola is a viral illness that usually occurs in children under 2 years of age. It is characterized by irritability, high fever lasting 2 to 3 days followed by a rash that is red, flat or slightly raised and may cover the entire body.

- Incubation period – unknown.
- Period of communicability – unknown – probably during the time the child has a fever.
- Exclusion period – until rash fades.

Rubella (German Measles – 3 Day)

The symptoms of rubella are slight sore throat, low grade fever, mild, red, slightly raised rash, which begins on the face and quickly spreads to the rest of the body. These symptoms last 2-3 days, and can also include swollen tender glands on back of skull behind ears. There are usually no cold symptoms associated with this disease.

- Incubation period – 2 to 3 weeks.
- Period of communicability – 7 days before and 5 days after rash appears.
- Exclusion period – 5 days after rash appears.

Scabies

Scabies is a very itchy skin rash. It appears as groups of pimples, with each pimple having a small hole in its center. It is often seen as red track along skin. This rash is usually located on parts of the body that are frequently handled (back of hands, wrists and abdomen). Redness, rash and itch may persist after treatment.

- Incubation period – immediate.
- Period of communicability – upon appearance until 24 -48 hours after treatment.
- Exclusion period – 24 hours following initial treatment. Others in family to be seen by doctor.

Strep Infections

Symptoms of a strep infection can include: Sore throat, nausea or vomiting, fever, headache and sometimes a rash appears. Most strep infections are mild and can be easily treated with antibiotics.

- Incubation period – 5 to 6 days.
- Period of communicability – until recovered.
- Exclusion period – 24 -48 hours following initial treatment, or as determined by physician.



IMMUNIZATIONS ARE IMPORTANT FOR CHILDREN

There has been much controversy of late about immunizations for children. By all means work with your child's doctor to determine what and when an immunization should take place.

General guidelines of immunizations are as follows:

AGE	IMMUNIZATION
2,4,6 and 15 months	Hib
2-3 months	DPT, OPV
3-4 months	DPT
4-5 months	DPT, OPV
10 months	OPV
11-18 months	DPT
Over 15 months and 12 years	Rubella, Measles, Mumps
2-6 years	DPT, Tuberculin, OPV
Every 10 years thereafter	Adult Tetanus

Special notes about immunizations -

DPT is for Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus. This immunization protects children against diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus.

OPV is an Oral Polio vaccine, which is to prevent polio. Polio is still a danger unless a child completes the Oral Polio Vaccine series.

It is especially important that girls have the rubella vaccine before they reach childbearing years. Rubella causes birth defects if contracted during the first three months of pregnancy.

A tetanus booster should be given if five years have passed since the last shot in the case of a severe, dirty wound occurring.



FINAL STEP

There are a great many diseases which can cause children to become ill. It's not necessary to know each and every one. What's important is that you pay attention to your child's health.

The following are things you can do to help your child remain healthy:

- Maintain a clean living environment.
- Have your child immunized against diseases as recommended by your physician.
- Know the signs and symptoms of illness and disease.
- Seek professional treatment when it is necessary.

Remember, there are no guarantees in life. Sometimes children become ill and contract diseases. But by becoming knowledgeable about diseases, the symptoms and treatments, you are taking a big step for your child's health.

OTHER STEP BY STEP TITLES WITH NUMBERS

1. Understanding Child Development – Birth to Two – “The Infant”
2. Understanding Child Development – Three to Five – “The Preschooler”
3. Understanding Child Development – Six to Eleven – “The School Aged Child”
4. Understanding Child Development – Twelve to Fifteen – “The Young Teen”
5. Understanding Child Development – Sixteen to Eighteen – “The Older Teen”
6. Communication – Responding to Children
7. Communication – Feelings
8. Communication – Asking Children Strength- Focused Questions
9. Communication – Being Direct with Children
10. Communication - The Languages of Love for Your Child
11. Communication – What you Say and How you Say It
12. What Every Parent Should Know About Child Abuse
13. Sharing Secrets and Keeping Surprises – James’s Story
14. Teaching Your Child to Say, “NO” – Jessica’s Story
15. Understanding Childhood Illnesses
16. Caring for a Sick Child
17. Disease and How it Spreads
18. First Aide – What Parents Need to Know
19. Home Safety
20. Childproofing Your Home
21. Teaching Safety
22. Food Safety
23. Foodborn Illness
24. Nutrition
25. Feeding Problems
26. Bringing a Foster Child Into Your Home
27. Understanding the Effects of Fostering on the Family
28. Understanding the Effects of Fostering on the Marriage
29. Guide to Dealing with Stress As a Parent
30. Guide to Building a Healthy Marriage Relationship
31. Bringing our Adopted Child into Our Home
32. Helping Children Understand Adoption
33. Joining With my Adopted Child’s Culture
34. Understanding the Birth Parent of My Child
35. The Blended Family
36. When Family Members Treat My Foster or Adoptive Child Different
37. Understanding Attachment
38. Recreating History for My Adopted Child

39. Helping the Child who has been Sexually Abused
40. Teaching about Sexuality
 - a. How to Talk to Your Child
 - b. How to Talk to Your Parents
41. Understanding Sexual Behaviors
42. Teaching Your Child about Abstinence
43. Talking to your Teen about Identity
44. Contracting with Your Teen About Behavior
45. Developing Responsibility
46. Teaching Your Child to Build Relationships
47. Teaching about Marriage and Family
48. Telling Your Child Someone has Died
49. Understanding the Grieving Cycle
50. Understanding and Approaching Behavior
51. Dealing with Lying
52. Toilet Training and Bedwetting
53. Dealing with Defiance
54. Dealing with Hitting and Biting
55. Dealing with Stealing
56. Dealing with Anger
57. Dealing with Fighting
58. The Child Who Plays With Fire
59. Helping My Child Deal with Fear
60. Helping My Child Kick a Bad Habit
61. Help with Tattling
62. Dealing with the Two Year Old's Temper Tantrum
63. Help with Thumb Sucking
64. Help with Bedtime Problems
65. Dealing with Substance Abuse
66. Understanding Suicide
67. Developing Good Study Habits for School
68. Dealing with Failure
69. Demonstrating Manners
70. Helping Siblings Get Along
71. Nurturing Optimism

MORE TITLES TO BE DEVELOPED IN THE FUTURE