

The Chickenpox Blister Sisters

[Announcer] This program is brought to you by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Kaya] Hi kids! Welcome to CDC Kidtastics Radio! I'm Kaya Kidtastic. Today, we're talking about the chickenpox sisters – villains who make their victims itch like crazy from the rash of blisters they cause.

[Chris] Chickenpox usually attacks once in a lifetime and likes to set its sights on kids. Once it gets going, chickenpox is very contagious and can catch up with anyone who hasn't gotten the chickenpox vaccine. Before the vaccine was available, 100 to 150 people in the US died each year from chickenpox.

[Caydan] Chickenpox makes victims feel sick, itchy, and miserable for a week or so. It can cause pneumonia, swelling of the brain, and bleeding problems. Luckily, not many people ever see *that* side of chickenpox.

[Kaya] Chickenpox can sneak in without any symptoms. You may be contagious even before you know you have it. The time you are most contagious is probably the first few days after the "pox," or blisters, appear.

[Karmen] Chickenpox is an "air and surface" attacker. The cough or sneeze of an infected person sends droplets into the air and onto surfaces. Others then take in the virus through their mouth or nose or when they touch a surface that has droplets on it and then touch their mouth or nose. Scratching the itchy lesions can also send the virus into the air and infect unsuspecting people.

[Chris] At first, chickenpox sneaks in disguised as a cold. But soon, it stamps its personal trademark on its victims—a red, itchy rash of blisters, usually showing up first on the face and chest. Once chickenpox has made its mark, it adds high fever and blisters all over the body.

[Caydan] Fortunately, you can make yourself nearly invincible against chickenpox. Talk to your parents and make sure you get the chickenpox vaccine!

[Kaya] Thanks for listening to CDC Kidtastics Radio. We'll talk to you again soon. Until then... be a safer, healthier kid!!

[Announcer] For more health information, go to www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.