

HAND FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE

What is Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease?

- Common, contagious illness caused by different viruses- most often the Coxsackie virus or Enterovirus
- It typically affects children 5 and younger but older children and rarely adults can get it as well
- It is usually seen in the late summer and early fall

What are the signs & symptoms?

- It usually starts with a fever, sore throat, and runny nose like the common cold
- However, a rash looking like tiny blisters may start to show up on certain body sites:
 - In the mouth such as the top of mouth, inner cheeks, gums, and sides of the tongue
 - Fingers
 - Palms of the hands
 - Soles of feet
 - Buttocks
 - Around the exterior mouth
- Symptoms are the worst in the first few days but are usually completely gone within a week
- Peeling of the fingers and toes can occur 1 to 2 weeks after the illness, but is self-resolving

How is it diagnosed?

- Your pediatrician can diagnose if your child has Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease based on symptoms and physical exam.

What is the treatment?

- Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen to ease fever and treat pain
- Call your pediatrician if your child's fever is greater than 3 days or if he/she is not drinking fluids.

How long is it contagious?

- Child is most contagious during first week of illness, but may shed the virus from nose, mouth, and lungs for 1 to 3 weeks and in the stool for weeks to months after the infection starts
- It is spread person-to-person by the following 2 ways:
 1. Respiratory route by contact with large droplets that form when child talks, coughs, or sneezes
 2. Fecal-Oral route by contact with stool of children who are infected

How can I help prevent and control the spread of Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease?

- Teach your children to cover their mouths & noses when sneezing or coughing with tissue or arm sleeve
- Everyone should **WASH their HANDS!**
 1. Especially right after using tissues or having contact with mucous
 2. Parents need to wash their hands after changing diapers
- Clean & Sanitize Toys
- Prevent sharing of food, drinks and personal items (toothbrushes, eating utensils)
- Separate sick children from other children
- Disinfect any surfaces your child may touch frequently

Can my child go to school or child care with Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease?

YES, except when:

- Child is not feeling well to participate in class or has a fever
- The teacher or child care provider feels he or she cannot take care of the child without compromising the care of the other children
- Child has many open blisters—it takes about 7 days for blisters to dry up

When can my child return to school or daycare?

- When all the exclusion criteria (listed above) are resolved
- Talk to your pediatrician's office if still unsure

If my child has already had Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease can he or she get it again?

- Yes—a child can have repeat infections with different strains of the virus or different viruses that cause Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease.