



**Hand Foot and Mouth Disease
(Coxsackievirus) Information**

Listed below is some general information on hand foot and mouth disease (HFMD-also known as Coxsackievirus) that we hope will be helpful.

Incubation Period (the time between infection and the onset of symptoms): The usual period from infection to onset of symptoms (the incubation period) is 3-7 days. Fever is often the first symptom of HFMD.

Symptoms: Hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) is a common illness of infants and children. It is characterized by fever, sores in the mouth and a rash with blisters. HFMD begins with a mild fever, poor appetite, malaise (“feeling sick”) and frequently a sore throat. One or two days after the fever begins, painful sores develop in the mouth. They begin as small red spots that blister and then often become ulcers. They are usually located on the tongue, gums and inside of the cheeks. The skin rash develops over 1-2 days with flat or raised red spots, sometimes with blisters. The skin rash does not itch and it is usually located on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. It may also appear on the buttocks or genitalia. A person with HFMD may have only the rash or the mouth ulcers.

Treatment: No specific treatment is available for this or other enterovirus infections. Symptomatic treatment is given to provide relief from fever, aches and pain from the mouth ulcers.

Method of Transmission: HFMD is moderately contagious. Infection is spread from person-to-person by direct contact with nose and throat discharges, saliva, fluid from blisters, or the stool of infected persons. A person is most contagious during the first week of the illness. HFMD is not transmitted to or from pets or other animals. The viruses that cause HFMD can remain in the body for weeks after the patient's symptoms have gone away. This means that the infected person can still pass the infection to other people even though they appear well.

Control Measures: According to the Ohio Department of Health, exclusion is recommended if children have blisters in their mouths and drool or have weeping lesions on their hands or are too ill to participate in daily activities. The importance of good hand washing should be reinforced as well as disinfection of soiled objects. Good hand washing, as with any disease is important in the prevention of and spreading of any disease. At school we encourage children to wash their hands before eating and after using the bathroom.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the nurse at your child’s school or more information may be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/hand-foot-mouth/index.html>