

Date

To Parents/Guardians:

Your child may have been exposed to **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease** (Coxsackie virus) at school. This is a common contagious viral infection in infants and children. This is *not* the same as foot-and-mouth disease.

Please watch your child for the symptoms listed below. If your child has the following symptoms, please call your child's healthcare provider for guidance.

Common Signs and Symptoms:

- Symptoms usually begin with a fever, poor appetite, malaise (feeling vaguely unwell), and often a sore throat.
- A couple of days after the fever starts, painful sores can develop in the mouth.
- A skin rash with flat or raised red spots can also develop, usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet and sometimes on the buttocks. This rash may blister, but it will not itch.

Hand Foot and Mouth disease is contagious and it is best controlled by diligent hand washing.

Please notify the School Office at _____ if your child becomes ill with Hand Foot and Mouth Disease or if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease(HFMD) information sheet

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a **common viral illness** that usually affects infants and children younger than 5 years old. However, it can sometimes occur in adults. Symptoms of hand, foot, and mouth disease include fever, blister-like sores in the mouth (herpangina), and a skin rash.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is caused by viruses that belong to the [Enterovirus](#) genus (group). This group of viruses includes polioviruses, coxsackieviruses, echoviruses, and enteroviruses.

- Hand, foot, and mouth disease usually starts with *a fever, poor appetite, a vague feeling of being unwell (malaise), and sore throat. One or 2 days after fever starts, painful sores usually develop in the mouth. They are small red spots that blister and that often become ulcers. The sores are often in the back of the mouth. A skin rash develops over 1 to 2 days. The rash has flat or raised red spots, sometimes with blisters. The rash is usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet; it may also appear on the knees, elbows, buttocks or genital area.*

Some people, especially young children, may get dehydrated if they are not able to swallow enough liquids because of painful mouth sores.

Persons infected with the viruses that cause hand, foot, and mouth disease may not get all the symptoms of the disease. They may only get it in the mouth .The viruses that cause hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) can be found in an infected person's:

- nose and throat secretions (such as saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus),
- blister fluid, and
- feces (stool).

An infected person may spread the viruses that cause hand, foot, and mouth disease through:

- close personal contact, directly with the open sores
- the air (through coughing or sneezing),
- contact with feces,
- contaminated objects and surfaces.

Generally, a person with hand, foot, and mouth disease is most contagious during the first week of illness. Please refer to physician when to return to school.

Prevention

- **Washing hands often with soap and water**, especially after changing diapers and using the toilet. Visit [CDC's Clean Hands Save Lives!](#) for more information.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and soiled items, including toys.
- Avoiding close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with people with hand, foot, and mouth disease.