



HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

What is hand, foot and mouth disease?

- Hand, foot and mouth disease is a disease of the skin and mucous membranes caused by one of several Coxsackie viruses.

What are symptoms that could occur?

- Begins with mild fever (100-102 degrees), poor appetite and feeling sick
- Sore throat present in some cases
- Fever usually disappears by day 3 or 4
- Sores that begin as small red spots, develop into blisters and sometimes ulcers in the mouth one or two days after fever
- Mouth sores are usually gone by day 7
- A skin rash develops over one to two days with flat or raised red spots, sometimes becoming blisters
- Rash is usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet and does not itch
- There are occasionally small blisters on the buttocks
- Hand and foot rash can last 10 days

How is it spread?

- Person to person by direct contact with nose or throat discharges or stool of infected person
- Most contagious during the first week of the illness
- The usual period from infection to onset of symptoms is 3 to 7 days
- It is not transmitted to or from pets or other animals
- Mainly occurs in children between 6 months and 4 years of age

How is it diagnosed and treated?

- Primary care provider evaluation
- Treatment is aimed at relief of symptoms

Should the sick child be isolated?

- The spread of infection is extremely difficult to prevent and the condition is harmless. Although most children are contagious from 2 days before to 2 days after the rash, avoidance of other children is unnecessary.

When can the child return to day care or school?

- When the temperature returns to normal range

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Should schools do special cleaning?

- Special cleaning is not necessary. Routine cleaning with EPA approved products is recommended.

If I have any other questions, whom can I contact?

- Call the Genesee County Health Department at 257-3612

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider.

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