



HAND, FOOT, AND MOUTH DISEASE (HFMD)

WHAT IS HFMD?

Is a viral illness that causes sores in or on the mouth and on the hands, feet and sometimes on the buttocks and legs. The sores may be painful. The illness doesn't usually last more than a week or so. It is common in children but can also occur in adults. Most cases occur in summer and fall.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HFMD?

It begins with a sore throat and a mild fever that can last from 1-3 days. Symptoms usually appear 3-7 days after exposure. Sores form on the inside of the mouth usually on the cheek, gums and on the side of the tongues. A rash and sometimes blisters appear on the feet and the hands and sometimes on the buttocks, and may persist for 7-10 days.



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



HOW DOES HFMD SPREAD?

It is spread through direct contact with nose and throat Discharges/fluids and from the stool of infected people.

- Any object contaminated by these fluids can also transmit it.
- Stool remains infectious for up to a month after the sores have healed.
- An infected individual is most contagious during the first week of illness.

WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT HFMD?

- There is no specific treatment available. Individuals should drink plenty of water and may take something to reduce the fever or ease the discomfort produced by the sores.
- Individuals should stay home if they have sores in their mouths and drool or have weeping skin lesions on their hands or are too ill to participate in activities.
- The best prevention is to wash hands thoroughly with soap and water. **Hand sanitizers will not work.**
- Contaminated surfaces and soiled items should be cleaned first with soap and water and then disinfected with a diluted bleach solution (1/4 cup of bleach to a gallon of water).