



HAND, FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE



Information Brochure

Exclusion from School

Children should be excluded from child care or school settings if there is fever and/or ulcers in the mouth, that is, when the child may be feeling ill. If blisters and/or lesions are open and weeping, children should be excluded until the blisters are dried and crusted.



Control Measures

1. Washing hands well, especially after going to the bathroom and changing and handling diapers,



2. Covering the mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.



3. Washing toys and other surfaces that have saliva on them.



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# Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease

## Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease (Coxsackievirus)

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is caused by a virus. Coxsackievirus disease, also known as hand, foot, and mouth disease, usually affects the inside of the mouth, palms of the hands, fingers, and soles of the feet. It is commonly caused by coxsackievirus A 16, an enterovirus, and less often by other types of coxsackievirus.

### Incubation Period

The incubation period for hand, foot, and mouth disease is usually **3-5 days**. Young children are primarily affected, but it may be seen in adults. Outbreaks may occur among groups of children, especially those in day care centers or preschools.



### Mode of Spread



People can spread the disease when they are shedding the virus. The primary means of transmission is from the feces of infected person to the mouth of the next person. The virus can be shed in the stool for several weeks after the onset of infection.

The virus is also spread through direct respiratory secretions and saliva on hands and objects.



Direct contact with the fluid from the skin blisters may also spread the virus.

Greatest communicability is during the acute stage when the person is feeling ill, usually during the 1st week of illness.

### Symptoms

The symptoms start much like a common cold with fever and malaise.

A rash appears as ulcers in the mouth, on the inner cheeks, gums, sides of the tongue, and as bumps or blisters on the hand, foot, and sometimes other parts of the skin. The skin rash may last for 7-10 days.



### Treatment

Comfort measures. Give meds as directed by the doctor to relieve pain and fever. Never give aspirin to children. Mouth sores may be painful, however it is important to increase fluids to prevent dehydration.