



Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease Notification

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Dear Parents/Caregivers

A case of hand, foot and mouth disease has been reported in your student's classroom.

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a very common and mild illness which affects children and is **not** related to the disease of a similar name that affects cattle, however it is a contagious condition.

I have included up-to-date information for parents/caregivers (please see over).

Please contact the College if you have any queries or concerns.

Yours sincerely

John Robinson
Principal

Hand, foot and mouth disease - including symptoms, treatment and prevention

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a viral infection usually caused by the coxsackie A virus, although occasionally it is caused by other viruses such as an echovirus or an enterovirus. [Enterovirus 71 \(EV71\)](#) can cause hand, foot and mouth disease as well as more serious illness, particularly in children.

How hand, foot & mouth disease is spread

The virus can spread from an infected person by close contact with the fluid in the blisters, by coughing and sneezing, by contact with faeces and by contact with contaminated objects or surfaces.

Signs and symptoms

Symptoms may include:

- fever
- tiredness
- loss of appetite
- blisters in the mouth and on the hands and feet (see image)
- a sore mouth for a few days before the ulcers or blisters appear.



Affected young children may refuse to eat or drink.

Image courtesy Prof. David Gordon, Flinders Medical Centre, Adelaide, South Australia.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis is usually made by clinical presentation.

Incubation period

(time between becoming infected and developing symptoms)

3 to 5 days.

Infectious period

(time during which an infected person can infect others)

The blisters are infectious as long as they contain fluid. The faeces can remain infectious for several weeks.

Treatment

Usually none is required. Use of paracetamol for the fever and any discomfort may be indicated. Aspirin should not be given to children under 12 years of age unless specifically recommended by a doctor.

Prevention

- [Exclude people with hand, foot and mouth disease from childcare, preschool, school and work](#) until all blisters have dried.
- The blisters should not be deliberately pierced or broken because the fluid within the blisters is infectious. The blisters will dry naturally.
- Follow good hand washing techniques and keeping areas clean procedures.

Useful links

- [Hand hygiene](#)
- [Keeping areas clean](#)
- [Enterovirus 71 \(EV71\) infection](#)
- [Exclusion periods from childcare, preschool, school and work](#)

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