



Hand, Foot Mouth Disease (Coxsackie Virus)

What is it?

Both hand, foot and mouth disease and herpangina are infections caused by the Coxsackie virus.

- In Herpangina small red spots that become ulcers appear at the back of the mouth.
- In hand, foot and mouth disease, the rash can appear as small red, blisters on the hands, feet, mouth or diaper area.
- Both illnesses can be very painful and may cause your child to refuse food and water.
- The spots and ulcers in both illnesses will go away on their own within 10 days.
- Mostly affects young children, however, it can happen at any age.
- Most common in the summer and fall.

Signs and Symptoms?

- A skin rash with red spotted small blisters on top, that appears on the hands (palms) and feet (soles), buttocks and sometimes other places on the body.
- Do not pop any bisters; they will heal on their own.
- Fever
- Headache
- Sore Throat
- Loss of Appetite
- Lack of energy
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Small, painful ulcers in the mouth

How does it spread?

- There is no vaccine against Coxsackie virus.
- Most contagious during the first week of illness.
- The incubation period for the virus is three to six days before child is sick.
- Spreads through contact with an infected person's saliva or stool.
- Germs can get on a person's hands or other objects and then spread into someone's mouth, causing infection.
- The virus can be found in a person's stool for up to 4 weeks after the start of the illness.
- Hand, foot and mouth disease is not spread from animals.

How to decrease the spread?

- Handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of infection.
- Key times to wash include:
 - After wiping the child's nose
 - After changing a diaper
 - After using the toilet
 - Before preparing food
- The virus can also survive on surfaces and objects, such as counters and toys, long enough to spread to another person- clean these surfaces on a regular basis.



Recommended Absence:

Only when the child is not well enough to participate or according to your policy.

Coxsackie virus is not reportable to the Medical Officer of Health.

Resources

About Kids Health

www.aboutkidshealth.ca

Caring for Kids

www.caringforkids.cps.ca

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www.hnhss.ca

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