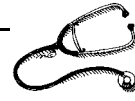


A Letter from the School Health Office



December 14, 2011

Dear Parent(s) or Guardians,

We have at least one confirmed case of Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) in our school. HFMD is a viral illness that usually affects infants and children younger than 10 years old. However, it can sometimes occur in adults.

Symptoms- HFMD usually starts with a fever, poor appetite, a feeling of being unwell and sore throat. One or two days after the fever starts, painful sores may develop in the mouth. A skin rash can develop in 1-2 days. The rash has flat or raised red spots, sometimes with blisters. The rash is usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet; it may also appear on the knees, elbows, buttocks or genital area. Persons infected with the virus may not get all the symptoms of the disease. They may only get the mouth sore or skin rash. The infection usually goes away without any serious complications within 7 to 10 days. In very rare occasions, complications of viral meningitis or encephalitis may occur.

Transmission- This virus is spread from person to person by direct contact. The virus is found in the nose, throat, fluid in blisters, and stool of the infected person. The virus is spread when the infected person touches an object and surfaces that are then touched by others. Infected persons are MOST contagious during the first week of the illness.

Prevention- There is no vaccine to protect against the virus. You can lower the risk of being infected by

- *Washing hands often with soap and water.
- *Disinfecting dirty surfaces and soiled items including toys.
- *Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging or sharing eating utensils or cups.

Treatment- There is no specific treatment; however, some things can be done to relieve symptoms,

- *Taking over-the-counter medications to relieve pain and fever (Caution: Aspirin should not be given to children.)
- *Using mouthwashes or sprays to numb the mouth pain.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is often confused with foot-and-mouth disease (also called hoof-and-mouth disease), a disease of cattle, sheep, and swine. However, the two diseases are caused by different viruses and are not related.

Persons concerned about their symptoms should contact their health care provider immediately.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 913-833-4420. Information is also available online from the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/hand-foot-mouth/index.html>.

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913-833-4420