
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease



What You Need to Know

What is hand, foot and mouth disease?

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a common viral illness caused by Enteroviruses (most commonly Coxsackievirus).

What are the symptoms of hand, foot, and mouth disease?

The illness usually starts with the following:

- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Sore throat
- Feeling of being unwell (malaise)

Painful sores may develop in the mouth one to two days after the fever starts. A skin rash and blisters may also develop within one to two days on the palms of hands, soles of feet, elbows, knees, or buttocks, or genital area.

How is hand, foot and mouth disease spread?

When a person is infected, the virus that causes hand, foot, and mouth disease can be found in nose and throat secretions, blister fluid, and feces (stool). An infected person can spread the disease through:

- Close personal contact
- The air from coughing or sneezing
- Contact with feces
- Contaminated objects and surfaces

Who can get hand, foot and mouth disease?

Infants and children younger than five years old are most commonly affected, but the viral illness can occur in people of all ages. Some people - especially adults - may become infected and show no symptoms at all, but they can still pass the virus to others.

Is there a treatment for hand, foot and mouth disease?

There is no specific treatment for hand, foot and mouth disease. However, over-the-counter medications can help relieve pain and fever. Mouthwashes and sprays that numb mouth pain can also help control pain. Aspirin should never be given to children.

How can hand, foot and mouth disease be prevented?

There is no vaccine to protect against hand, foot and mouth disease. However, there are steps a person can take to lower their risk of becoming infected:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water, especially after changing diapers and using the bathroom.
- Clean dirty surfaces and soiled items like toys and countertops with soap and water, then disinfect with a solution of once ounce of bleach to nine ounces of water.
- People should stay home while they are sick with hand, foot, and mouth disease. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends talking with a healthcare provider if you are not sure when you/your child should return to work, school, or daycare.
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HAND WASHING INSTRUCTIONS:

- Use soap and running water
- Rub your hands vigorously for 20 seconds
- Wash all surfaces, including:
 - backs of hands
 - wrists
 - between fingers
 - under fingernails
- Rinse well
- Dry hands with a paper towel
- Turn off the water using a paper towel instead of bare hands

DISINFECTING HARD SURFACES:

- Use a chlorine bleach solution made by adding one ounce of fresh bleach to nine ounces of water. Spray or use a cloth to apply to surfaces and let stand for 10 minutes if possible.
- Rinse with clear water.



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