



Children can be mildly infectious for several weeks as the virus may be passed out with the faeces (stools) for several weeks after the symptoms have gone. Therefore, it is sensible to maintain good hygiene to reduce the chance of passing on the virus. For example:

- Hand washing after using the toilet
- Cover mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing
- Wipe the nose and mouth with tissues
- Adults should take particular care when handling nappies, tissues and wash hands after.
- Soiled cloths, bedding and towels should be washed on a hot cycle of the washing machine
- It is best not to share cups, eating utensils towels etc. whilst ill with this infection and for several weeks afterwards.
- Do not deliberately pierce blisters, as the fluid is infectious, it will cause pain and it could cause further infection.

How can I contact a member of the Infection Prevention & Control Team?

Tell the Clinical Nurse Manager, doctor or nurse looking after you if you would like to speak to a member of the Infection Prevention & Control Team and they will contact us.

We have made every possible effort to make sure that all the information provided in this leaflet is true, accurate, complete and up to date at the time of publication

Additional information can be found at:
<http://intranet.tuh.ie/departments/IPC/Pages/home.aspx>



References

Patient.co.uk and the HPSE
 (Health Protection Surveillance Centre)

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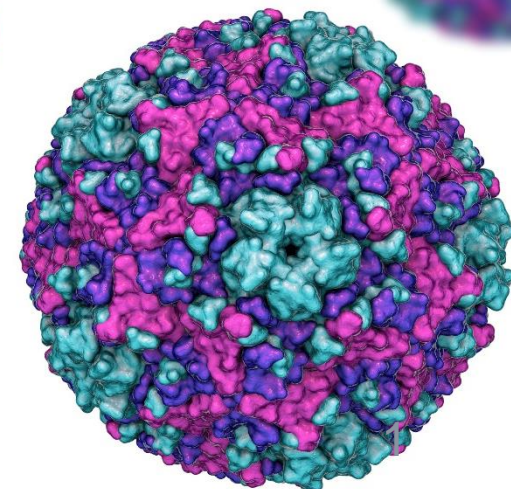
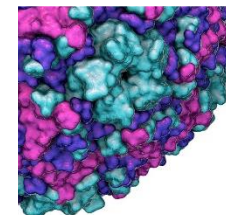
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Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease



What is hand, foot & mouth disease?



Hand foot & mouth disease is an infectious disease caused by a viral infection. It can happen at any age, although it is more common in young children. Most children fully recover within a week. It is rare that serious complications occur. This disease is not related to the disease with a similar name which affects animals.

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

The disease most commonly affects children under ten years of age. Older children and adults are sometimes affected and tend to develop a milder form of the illness compared with younger children. The illness often starts with a feeling of being unwell for a day or so. This may include a high temperature (fever). After this a sore throat commonly happens, quickly followed by small spots/lumps that develop inside the mouth, palms of hands and on the soles of the feet. These soon develop into small mouth ulcers.

In about one in four cases; a day or so after the mouth ulcers occur, spots can also develop on the skin. Spots sometimes also come up on the buttocks, legs and genitals. The spots rarely develop on other parts of the body. The spots are similar to chickenpox, but are smaller. Unlike chickenpox, they are not usually itchy but can be quite sensitive to touch.

Is hand, foot and mouth disease serious?

Usually not. The Condition usually lasts seven to ten days and resolves itself. The mouth ulcers can be painful and can last up to a week. The sore mouth can make a child miserable for a few days.

What is the treatment for hand, foot & mouth disease?

There is no treatment that will take away the virus. The aim is to ease the symptoms and make your child as comfortable as possible until the illness goes away (which it normally does within a week or so).

How to make your child comfortable

Dress the child in loose clothing. The aim is to prevent overheating or shivering.

Give lots of drinks; this helps to prevent dehydration. Cool sloppy foods such as yogurts may help if the mouth is sore. Ice lollies may also help and are a way of giving fluids

Is hand, foot and mouth disease infectious?

Yes, it is very infectious. The incubation period is three to six days.

This means it takes three to six days to develop symptoms after being infected from another person. Most cases are passed on from coughing and sneezing which transmits the virus into the air.

If a patient has *Hand Foot & Mouth* we may share that information with other hospitals. The Patient should also tell their carers of the result on admission to another hospital.

Can children go to school if they have hand, foot & mouth?

Sometimes small outbreaks occur in nurseries and schools. Hand foot & mouth is very infectious until the spots and mouth ulcers have gone. Therefore children should be kept off school until the symptoms ease, all blisters have dried and they are feeling better.

There is no need to wait for the last blister to disappear to go back to school or nursery, providing the child is well.

The condition usually lasts seven to ten days and resolves spontaneously

