



HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE (7/19)

Cause

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is always caused by a Coxsackie A virus. It has no relationship to hoof and mouth disease of cattle. It is a very contagious illness that tends to occur in pediatric children 6 months to 4 years of age.

Symptoms include sore throat, small ulcers/canker sores in mouth and back of throat, and low grade fever.

The fever and discomfort are usually gone by day 3 or 4. The mouth ulcers resolve in 7 days, but the rash on the hands and feet can last 10 days. The only complication seen with any frequency is dehydration from refusing fluids.

The incubation period after contact is 3 to 6 days. The condition is the most contagious during the first few days of the rash. The patient should not have close contact with other young children until the fever is gone and the rash begins to fade.

Home Care

Diet. Avoid giving your child citrus, salty, or spicy foods. Change to a soft diet for a few days and encourage plenty of clear fluids. Cold drinks, popsicles, and sherbet are often well received. If your child is old enough, gargling with warm saline solution may help.

Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen may be given for a fever or to relieve mouth pain.

Call our office Immediately if:

- Your child has not urinated for more than 8 hours

- The neck becomes stiff
- Your child becomes confused or delirious
- Your child becomes hard to awaked completely
- Your child starts acting very sick

Call during regular hours if:

- Your child is not drinking much
- The fever lasts more than 3 days
- The mouth pain becomes severe
- The gums become red, swollen, or tender
- You feel your child is getting worse
- You have other concerns or questions