



Cicero Health Department
2250 S. 49th Avenue
Cicero, IL, 60804

Notice to Schools & Public
Re: Hand Food & Mouth Disease

What is Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD)? Hand Foot and Mouth Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is a viral illness that commonly affects children and typically is not serious. Children under 5 years of age are most affected, although anyone is potentially susceptible.

What are the symptoms? HFMD can cause fever, blister-like mouth sores, sore throat, loss of appetite, and a skin rash that may occur on the fingers and palms of the hands, on the buttocks, or on the soles of the feet. Dehydration may occur in young children if they cannot swallow adequate liquids due to painful mouth sores.

How long does this disease last? A person usually gets sick within three to six days of becoming infected. The rash can last for about seven to ten days.

How is HFMD disease spread? The viruses that cause HFMD are often spread through close personal contact with an infected individual's saliva, nasal mucus, fluid from blisters or scabs, feces, and contaminated surfaces. It can also be transmitted through the air, by droplets, while an infected individual coughs or sneezes.

Who is at risk for HFMD infection? Infants and children less than 5 years of age are at highest risk for contracting HFMD, but older children and adults can be infected, especially when they live or work with infants. If you are pregnant, contact your doctor if you think you may have been exposed to HFMD.

What preventive measures and treatments are available?

- To lower the risk of infection, wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose, using the toilet and changing diapers.
- Teach children to cover their mouths with tissue when sneezing or coughing.
- Clean and disinfect soiled items such as toys and high-touch surfaces.
- Avoid close contact with an infected person, and sharing cups and utensils with those infected with HFMD.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

HFMD is not a vaccine-preventable disease. Treatment for HFMD is mostly supportive care and should involve increased fluid intake to prevent dehydration and the use of pharmacist/physician recommended over-the-counter medication to reduce fever and pain associated with mouth sores.

What should schools do?

- Notify exposed families about HFMD and advise them to monitor for symptoms.
- Encourage parents to seek medical advice if a child is unwilling to eat or drink due to mouth sores

What are the recommendations for exclusion?

Students who are drooling and cannot maintain hygiene should be excluded. Infected individuals who come to school and early childcare centers with a fever of 100.4F (38 C) should be excluded. Schools and early childcare centers should consider whether affected individuals require additional care that exceeds the facility's staffing abilities.

- ✚ Note: Students with baseline conditions such as chronic drooling or hand hygiene challenges (e.g. due to physical or developmental disabilities) should not be excluded solely on the basis of these conditions. Exclusions should be based on new/worsening symptoms of HFMD. Schools and childcare facilities should provide reasonable accommodations and support to help these students maintain hygiene and participate safely.

For more information, visit Symptoms and Diagnosis of Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease | CDC or Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease - Symptoms and Causes

<https://www.cdc.gov/hand-foot-mouth/about/>

Cicero residents, please feel free to reach out to the Cicero Health Department for more information:
Telephone: 708-656-3600 x147 | Email: Healthclinic@thetownofcicero.com