

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease
City of Albuquerque
Environmental Health Department



WHAT IS IT?

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease, or HFMD, is a common viral illness that usually affects children younger than 5 years old. Most people recover in 7 -10 days without medical treatment. Health complications from HFMD are not common, but they can include, viral meningitis or loss of finger and/or toenails. Pregnant women should avoid close contact with anyone with HFMD as they can pass the virus to the baby if they become sick shortly before delivery or have symptoms at the time of delivery.

SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT

Symptoms of HFMD include:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or 38° Centigrade)
- Little appetite
- Sore throat
- Painful sores (small red spots that blister) can develop in the mouth
- A rash (flat red spots, sometimes with blisters) on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. This rash may also appear on the knees, elbows, buttocks or genital area.



Treatment for HFMD includes, over-the-counter medications to reduce fever and pain and drinking enough fluids to prevent dehydration. There is no vaccine for HFMD at this time.

Some people, especially adults, may not have any symptoms, but they can still spread the viruses to others especially during the first week of illness.

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

HFMD is mostly spread during the first week of illness. People infected with HFMD can spread it to others when they cough or sneeze. You can also get HFMD if you come into contact with an infected person's blister fluid or feces (poop). You cannot get HFMD from pets or other animals.

PREVENTION

Avoid HFMD by:

- Washing your hands often with soap and water
- Disinfecting dirty surfaces and soiled items
- Avoiding close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with infected people
- Cleaning dirty surfaces and soiled items (including toys) first with soap and water, and then disinfecting them using a dilute solution of chlorine-containing bleach (3/4 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water).



Keep children home when they have a fever. Talk to your doctor if your child's symptoms get worse.

For more information on HFMD, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/hand-foot-mouth/index.html>