



Orchard Primary & Pre-School

9 October 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

You are receiving this letter as there has been a case of Hand, Foot and Mouth disease reported in Reception. For more information, please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/hand-foot-mouth-disease/>

What is it?

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a common infection that causes mouth ulcers and spots on the hands and feet. It's most common in young children – particularly those under 10 – but can affect older children and adults as well. Hand, foot and mouth disease will usually clear up by itself within 7 to 10 days. The infection is not related to foot and mouth disease, which affects farm animals

Symptoms

The symptoms of hand, foot and mouth disease usually develop between three and five days after being exposed to the infection. The first symptoms may include:

- A sore throat
- A high temperature
- Not wanting to eat

After a few days, mouth ulcers and a rash will appear. The symptoms are usually the same in adults and children, but they can be worse in babies and children under 5.

What to do if you or your child has hand, foot and mouth disease

If you have hand, foot and mouth disease, the best thing to do is to stay at home until you're feeling better. You cannot take antibiotics or medicines to cure hand, foot and mouth disease; it usually gets better on its own in 7-10 days. To help the symptoms:

- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration – avoid acidic drinks, such as fruit juices.
- Eat soft foods like yoghurts – avoid hot and spicy foods.
- Take paracetamol or ibuprofen to help ease a sore mouth or throat.

Staying Off School or Nursery

You should keep your child off school while they're feeling unwell. But as soon as they're feeling better, they can come back. There's no need to wait until all the blisters have healed. Keeping your child away from other children for longer is unlikely to stop the illness spreading.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease in Pregnancy

Although there's usually no risk to the pregnancy or baby, it's best to avoid close contact with anyone who has hand, foot and mouth disease. This is because:

- Having a high temperature during the first 3 months of pregnancy can lead to miscarriage, although this is very rare.
- Getting hand, foot and mouth disease shortly before giving birth can mean your baby is born with a mild version of it.

Speak to a GP or your midwife if you have been in contact with someone with hand, foot and mouth disease.

Preventing Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

Hand, foot and mouth disease is easily passed on to other people; it is spread in coughs, sneezes and the fluid in the blisters. You can start spreading it from a few days before you have any symptoms but you are most likely to spread it to others in the first 5 days after symptoms start.

To reduce the risk of spreading hand, foot and mouth disease:

- Stay off school or work until you or your child are feeling better
- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Use tissues to trap germs when you cough or sneeze
- Bin used tissues as quickly as possible
- Do not share towels or household items like cups or cutlery
- Wash soiled bedding and clothing on a hot wash

Thank you for your co-operation.

Kind Regards

Sarah Boulton

Sarah Bitcon
Head Teacher