

HAND FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE (COXSACKIE)

DATE OF EXPOSURE _____

NOTICE TO PARENTS

Your child may have been exposed to hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD, a virus common in infants and children under 11 years of age.

School policy excludes children from school while mouth sores are present.

CAUSATIVE AGENT: Viruses from the group called enteroviruses cause HFMD. The most common cause is Coxsackie virus A16. This infection is a mild disease and nearly all patients recover without medical treatment in 7 to 10 days. Rarely the patient with Coxsackie virus infection may also develop “aseptic” or viral meningitis, in which the person has fever, headache, stiff neck, or back pain, and may need to be hospitalized.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS: It is characterized by fever, sores in the mouth, and a rash with blisters. HFMD begins with a mild fever, poor appetite, malaise (“feeling sick”) and frequently a sore throat. One or two days after the fever begins, painful sores develop in the mouth. They begin as small red spots that blister and often become ulcers. They are usually located on the tongue, gums, and inside of the cheeks. The skin rash develops over 1-2 days with flat or raised red spots, some with blisters. The rash does not itch and is usually located on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. It may appear on the buttocks. A person with HFMD may have only the rash or mouth ulcers.

PERIOD OF COMMUNICABILITY: HFMD is most contagious during the first week when mouth sores are present. The virus may shed in the stool for several weeks.

METHOD OF TRANSMISSION: Contact with infected persons stool or mouth sores.

PREVENTION: Frequent *handwashing*, especially after diapering.

For more information contact your health care provider, School Nurse, the Marin County Health Department or <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/enterovirus/hfhf.htm>.