Dear Parents/Gardians

It has been brought to my attention that Hand-foot-and mouth disease maybe going around school. I have put together a little fact sheet. I just want you to be aware and know what to look for.

Hand-foot-and-mouth disease may cause some or all of the following signs and symptoms:

* Fever
* Sore throat
* Feeling of being unwell (malaise)
* Painful, red, blister-like lesions on the tongue, gums and inside of the cheeks
* A red rash, without itching but sometimes with blistering, on the palms, soles and sometimes the buttocks
* Irritability in infants and toddlers
* Loss of appetite

The usual period from initial infection to the onset of signs and symptoms (incubation period) is three to seven days. A fever is often the first sign of hand-foot-and-mouth disease, followed by a sore throat and sometimes a poor appetite and malaise. One or two days after the fever begins, painful sores may develop in the mouth or throat. A rash on the hands and feet and possibly on the buttocks can follow within one or two days.

The virus is spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. **Good hand washing**, especially after handling soiled tissues or using the bathroom, is the best way to prevent infection.

There is no specific treatment available. Symptomatic treatment is given to provide relief from fever, aches, or pain from mouth ulcers. Exclusion from school is not necessary unless a fever of over 100 is present and in that case the student should be home fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.

**When to see a doctor**
Hand-foot-and-mouth disease is usually a minor illness causing only a few days of fever and relatively mild signs and symptoms. Contact your doctor, however, if mouth sores or a sore throat keep your child from drinking fluids. Contact your doctor also if after a few days, your child's signs and symptoms worsen.

Thank you,

Christine Pallozzi, RN

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