



Monroe Township Public Schools

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

This letter is to inform you that several students in our district have been diagnosed with Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) which is a contagious viral illness. We wanted you to be aware so should you or your child develop symptoms of the disease, you may choose to contact your Health Care Provider for guidance.

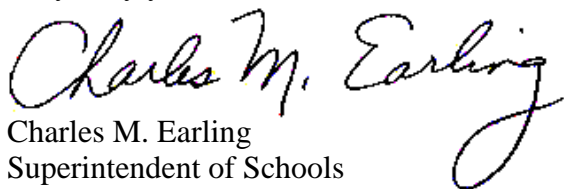
Early symptoms may start with a fever followed by a sore throat and a rash with blisters on the palms of the hand, soles of the feet, and in the mouth. This disease commonly affects infants and children and most often occurs in the summer and early autumn. The incubation period is from three to seven days and is most contagious during the first week of the illness but can spread for weeks after the symptoms disappear. People who get the disease and show no symptoms can still spread the virus.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is spread by direct contact with mucus, saliva or feces of an infected person. There are simple steps you can take to reduce the risk of getting sick, but there is no preventable vaccine. Practice good hand washing and cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Making sure your student gets the proper amount of sleep along with good nutritional choices is always a good idea and may help to prevent your child from getting sick.

We strongly suggest that you seek professional medical guidance should anyone in your household develop these disease symptoms. While there is no specific treatment and many doctors do not prescribe medicine for this illness, your Health Care Provider may provide specific treatment based on your child's medical history.

Attached is additional information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for your further reference. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's school nurse with additional questions or concerns.

Very truly yours,


Charles M. Earling
Superintendent of Schools

<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HandFootMouthDisease/>



Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease



Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a contagious viral illness that commonly affects infants and children. While there is no vaccine to prevent the disease, there are simple steps you and your family can take to reduce the risk of getting sick.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) is a contagious viral illness that commonly affects infants and children in the U.S. and abroad. In the U.S. and other countries with temperate climates, HFMD occurs most often in summer and early autumn. While there is no vaccine to prevent the disease, there are simple steps you and your family can take to reduce the risk of getting sick.

HFMD

- Usually causes fever, sores in the mouth, and a rash with blisters.
- Is moderately contagious.
- Mostly affects children younger than 10 years of age, but people of any age can be infected.
- Has no specific treatment.
- Infection risk can be reduced by practicing good hygiene, such as washing hands frequently.
- Is *not* the same as foot-and-mouth disease.

What Are the Symptoms of HFMD?



Symptoms usually begin with a fever, poor appetite, malaise (feeling vaguely unwell), and often a sore throat. A couple of days after the fever starts, painful sores can develop in the mouth. A skin rash with flat or raised red spots can also develop, usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet and sometimes on the buttocks. This rash may blister, but it will not itch.

Some people with HFMD may only have a rash; others may only have [mouth sores](#). Other people with HFMD may show no symptoms at all.

Is HFMD Serious?

HFMD is usually not serious. The illness is typically mild, and nearly all patients recover in 7–10 days without medical treatment. Complications are uncommon. Rarely, an infected person can develop viral meningitis (characterized by fever, headache, stiff neck, or back pain) and may need to be hospitalized for a few days. [Other rare complications](#) can include polio-like paralysis or encephalitis (brain inflammation), which can be fatal.

Is HFMD Contagious?

Yes, HFMD is moderately contagious. The disease is spread by direct contact with nose and throat discharges, saliva, fluid from blisters, or the stool of infected persons.

People with HFMD are most contagious during the first week of their illness, but they can spread the virus that causes HFMD weeks after symptoms have gone away. It is also important to remember that people who get HFMD and show no symptoms of the disease can still spread the viruses that cause it.

Who Is at Risk for HFMD?

HFMD mostly infects children younger than 10 years of age, but older children and adults can also get the disease. Individuals who get HFMD develop immunity to the specific virus that caused their infection. However, because HFMD can be caused by several different viruses, people can get the disease again if they are infected by one of the other HFMD-causing viruses.



Can HFMD Be Treated?

There is no specific treatment for HFMD. Fever and pain can be managed with over-the-counter fever reducers/pain relievers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. In addition, individuals with HFMD should drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration (loss of body fluids).

Can HFMD Be Prevented?

There is no vaccine to protect against HFMD. However, the risk of getting the disease can be reduced by

- Frequently washing hands, especially after diaper changes;
- Thoroughly cleaning objects and surfaces (toys, doorknobs, etc.) that may be contaminated with a virus that causes HFMD; and
- Avoiding close contact (like kissing and hugging) with people who are infected.

Is HFMD the Same as Foot-and-Mouth Disease?

No. HFMD is often confused with foot-and-mouth (also called hoof-and-mouth) disease, which affects cattle, sheep, and swine. For information on foot-and-mouth disease, visit the Web site of the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#).

More Information

- [About Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease](#)
- [Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease Outbreaks](#)
- [Clean Hands Save Lives!](#) (hand-washing tips)
- [Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease](#) [PODCAST - 4:20 minutes]

CDC works 24/7 saving lives, protecting people from health threats, and saving money to have a more secure nation. A US federal agency, CDC helps make the healthy choice the easy choice by putting science and prevention into action. CDC works to help people live longer, healthier and more productive lives.

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