



Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease

Hand, Foot, & Mouth Disease (HFMD) Quick Reference

Symptoms	Symptoms can include: fever, reduced food/fluid intake, sore throat, runny nose, mouth sores, and skin rash on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet.
Incubation Period	Around 3-6 days
Period of Communicability	Individuals with HFMD are most contagious during the first week that they are ill. The virus can potentially be spread for days or weeks.
Mode of Transmission	Contact with respiratory droplets, direct contact with secretions (saliva, drool, nasal mucus) of an infected person, contact with an infected person's stool, or touching objects and surfaces that have the virus on them (and then touching eyes, nose, or mouth).
Treatment	There is no specific treatment. Measures should be taken to control pain/discomfort caused by blisters and to prevent dehydration. Over-the-counter pain relievers and encouraging fluids can help reduce pain and prevent complications from dehydration.
When to Report to CCHHS	HFMD is not a reportable condition in Washington State. Schools, childcare centers, and the public are always welcome to call CCHHS at 360-414-5599 (extension 6431) to discuss cases or get information but there is no reporting requirement for individual cases. If an outbreak is suspected with multiple cases, please call CCHHS for support to determine if additional steps are needed to control the spread.

Should children with HFMD be excluded from childcare or school?

Children with HFMD can continue to attend childcare and school as long as they have no fever, uncontrolled drooling (with mouth sores), and they feel well.

How can schools and childcare facilities prevent the spread of HFMD?

Frequent and thorough hand washing with soap and water, increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, avoiding touching the face, and avoiding close contact with secretions or droplets from an infected individual can all help prevent the spread. Increased cleaning and disinfection of shared objects including toys, doorknobs, surfaces, and supplies is especially important.



Additional Resources

CDC: [Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease \(HFMD\)](#) & OSPI: [Infectious Disease Control Guide for School Staff](#)