



For more information about Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease contact:

The Community Infection Prevention and Control Nurse

or

your local Health Protection Unit

or

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/topics>

Information produced in collaboration with:

The Health Protection Agency North West,
North West Infection Prevention and Control Nurses

and

North West Environmental Health Officers

HPA North West



Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

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INFORMATION LEAFLET

What is Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease?

This is a mild infection caused by a virus that usually affects young children.

What are the symptoms?

It causes blisters on the hands and feet, and mouth ulcers.

Those affected may have a sore throat and develop a high temperature.

Symptoms usually start 3 – 5 days after contact with someone with the virus.

These symptoms last for between 7 to 10 days.

Is it the same as foot and mouth disease in cows?

NO. Foot and Mouth disease in cows is caused by a completely different virus.

How is Hand, Foot and Mouth virus spread?

The virus is spread by coughs and sneezes, and is also found in the faeces of infected children.

How can spread be prevented?

- Since the virus is found in faeces, attention to hand washing after using the toilet is very important to prevent / reduce spread.
- Whilst a person has the blisters present they should avoid sharing towels with other people.

Is there any treatment?

- There is no specific treatment for Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease – it is usually a mild illness.
- If a child feels unwell Paracetamol may be helpful (do **not** use aspirin in children under 16 years of age). You may wish to discuss this with your local pharmacist as there are different dosages for children.

How long should children stay off school?

- Children who are unwell should be kept off school/nursery until their symptoms have subsided and they are feeling better.
- Keeping children off school/nursery for longer than this is unlikely to stop the virus spreading. There may be other children in the school/nursery who appear well but are spreading the virus.