

What Child Care Providers Should Know About...

Hand-Foot-and-Mouth Disease (Coxsackie Virus A16)



What is it?

Hand-foot-and mouth disease is a common and mild childhood illness caused by a virus called coxsackie virus A16.

What are the Symptoms?

In many people, infection with the virus causes mild or no symptoms.

Symptoms include:

- ⊗ Sores in the mouth
- ⊗ Rash of tiny painful blisters on the hands and feet
- ⊗ Mild fever
- ⊗ Sore throat
- ⊗ Stomach ache
- ⊗ Blisters contain the virus

Symptoms may last for 7 to 10 days.

Who gets and How?

Illness easily spreads among children through direct contact with saliva, from blisters in the mouth, fluid from blisters on hands and feet and infected stool.

Outbreaks in child care facilities correspond with outbreaks in the community and more common in summer and fall.

When should children with this illness be Excluded?

Children with this disease do not need to stay home as long as they feel well enough to participate.

Exclusion does not prevent additional cases. Virus may be present in the stool for weeks after symptoms disappear.

Children do not need treatment and will get better within a week.

How Can I Limit Spread of Disease?

- ⊗ Follow strict hand washing and personal hygiene procedures.
- ⊗ Always wash hands, especially after using bathroom, diapering or assisting children in bathroom. And before eating or handling food.
- ⊗ Wash and disinfect all articles contaminated with food or mucus.

If an outbreak occurs:

- ⊗ Notify parents and staff
- ⊗ Make sure all staff and children use good handwashing techniques.

Resource California Childcare Health Program