

Hand-Foot-and-Mouth

Information for Parents and Caregivers

What is Hand-Foot-and-Mouth?

Hand-foot-and-mouth is caused by a virus and there is no specific treatment for the disease.

Symptoms of a Hand-Foot-and-Mouth

- Blister like lesions most commonly on hands, feet, and mouth
- Fever
- Decreased eating and/or drinking

Is Hand-Foot-and-Mouth Contagious? What is its Duration?

Hand-foot-and-mouth blister lesions usually present within 3-6 days from exposure and resolve within 7-10 days. Hand-foot-and-mouth is very contagious and easily spread in childcare centers.

Treatment & Symptom Management

There is no specific treatment for hand-foot-and-mouth. Treatment is aimed at symptom management including managing fever and oral pain with acetaminophen and ibuprofen. If there are painful oral lesions, it is important to ensure the child is staying hydrated.

Prevention

Prevention of hand-foot-and-mouth includes proper hand washing, not touching affected skin, covering mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Prevention for caregivers include thorough hand washing after touching an infected child, changing diapers, sneezing/coughing.

When Can a Sick Child Return to Day Care, School, and other Social Settings?

A sick child should be excluded from social settings until they are fever free for 24 hours.



ALABAMA REGIONAL CENTER FOR INFECTION PREVENTION
AND CONTROL TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
The University of Alabama at Birmingham

Alabama Department of Health, Communicable Disease Chart for Alabama's Schools and Childcare Facilities,
<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/infectiousdiseases/assets/countyschoolsinfection2pg.11.17.15.pdf>

The ARC IPC is funded through a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (1NU50CK000545-01-00), Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Infectious Diseases (ELC).