



Hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD)

What is the treatment for HFMD?

There is no specific treatment for HFMD.

Symptomatic treatment is given to provide relief from fever, body aches or pain from mouth ulcers.

What can we do to prevent HFMD?

There is no vaccine available against HFMD. The risk of infection can be lowered by good hygiene practices, such as:

- Proper hand washing with soap and water, especially after going to the bathroom, changing diapers and/or handling diapers or other stool-soiled material with soap and water.
- Washing toys & other surfaces that have saliva on them.
- Teaching children to practice good hygiene by explaining to them why it is best not to put their fingers, hands or any other objects in their mouth.
- Covering the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.

- Excluding children from child-care or school setting if they develop signs and symptoms of HFMD (i.e. fever, mouth ulcers or skin rashes).
- Taking your children to a doctor if they have any of the symptoms above.
- Avoid bringing children to crowded areas and public places.
- Do not share personal belongings, tooth brush, towel, blankets, fork or spoon.
- Cleaning of contaminated surfaces and soiled items first with soap and water, and then disinfecting them by diluted solution of chlorine-containing bleach (made by mixing approximately ¼ cup of bleach with 1 gallon of water).

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What is hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD)?

Hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) is a common infectious viral disease of infants and children below 12 years of age. It is characterized by fever, minute ulcers in the mouth and a rash with or without blisters.

Organisms:

Viruses from the group called Coxsackie A16 or the Enteroviruses 71.

Incidence:

Commonly in children. However can occur in adolescents and adults, although less common. Outbreaks in Western pacific Region including Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and China.

Transmission:

Person to person by direct contact:

- From unwashed hands.
- By direct contact with fluid from blisters.
- Virus contaminant and surfaces.
- By fecal-oral route.
- Swallowing or breathing in, the infected droplets from coughing or sneezing.

Symptoms and Signs:

Incubation period 7-10 days

- Fever might or might not be present.
- Multiple minute ulcers on the hard palate in the mouth might or might not be there.
- Vomiting and poor appetite.
- Rash with blisters on palms of hands & soles of feet.
- May have rashes on the limbs and buttocks in infants.



Complications:

1) Meningitis:

- Inflammation of the membranes (meninges) surrounding the brain and spinal cord.

2) Encephalitis:

- Inflammation of the brain.

3) Polio like paralysis:

- Polio is an infectious disease caused by poliovirus, that in its most severe form causes nerve injury leading to paralysis.

4) Pulmonary oedema.

- A condition caused by excess fluid in the lungs.