



ST. MARY'S *Catholic High School, Dubai*

HAND, FOOT & MOUTH DISEASE



What is hand, foot and mouth disease and why has my child got it?

Hand, foot and mouth is a common childhood condition that can also affect adults. It is often caused by the coxsackie virus and causes a mild illness in most children. The illness usually clears up by itself in 7-10 days.

What are the signs and symptoms?

The first symptoms of hand, foot and mouth are:

- **Sore throat**
- **High temperature above 38 degrees**
- **Not wanting to eat and drink.**

A few days after the temperature, ulcers appear in the mouth and a rash appears on hands, feet and sometimes thighs and bottom. The rash starts as spots which can be red, pink or darker than your normal skin tone. The spots then develop into blisters. The blisters are grey or lighter than your normal skin tone and can be painful. Painful blisters in the mouth can make it difficult to eat and drink. Children younger than five years old may get worse symptoms than older children and adults.



Does my child need any tests to confirm the diagnosis?

The diagnosis is made by a doctor or other medical practitioner who can recognize hand, foot and mouth from the rash your child has, and the history given by yourselves.

What treatments are available?

You cannot take antibiotics or other medicines to cure hand, foot and mouth.

It has to run its course and gets better on its own in 7-10 days.

Is there anything I can do to help my child?

There are some ways you can help your child feel better.

- Encourage lots of fluids to stop them getting dehydrated. Avoid acidic drinks.
- Use paracetamol and Ibuprofen to help with the pain.
- Try soft or liquid foods like soup and ice cream.



How to stop Hand, foot and Mouth disease spreading?

Hand, foot and mouth is very contagious which means it is easily passed from one person to another. It is spread by coughing, sneezing and in faeces (poo). You can spread it a few days before you have symptoms, but you are most likely to pass it on a few days after symptoms started. To try to stop giving it to another person you can ask your child to:

- Sneeze and cough into a tissue
- Wash their hands after going to the toilet, coughing or sneezing
- Bin used tissues as quickly as possible.
- Please do not send your child to school if they have fever

School Policy on HFM Disease

- According to DHA guidelines, if your child is diagnosed with HFM disease, the child is excluded from school until all blisters have dried (usually 3-6 days)
- The close contacts of HFM disease are not excluded from the school.

