

# Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD)

## What is hand, foot and mouth disease?

- Common viral disease of the skin and mucous membranes caused by enteroviruses. Small, blister-like sores appear in the mouth, backs of hands, palms, tops of feet and soles.

## What are symptoms that could occur?

- Fever
- Reduced appetite
- Sore throat
- Painful sores develop, but not itchy

## How is it spread?

- Person to person by direct contact with nose or throat discharges or stool of infected person
- Most contagious during the first week of the illness
- The usual period from infection to onset of symptoms is 3 – 7 days
- It is not transmitted to or from pets or other animals
- Mainly occurs in children between 6 months and 4 years of age
- Virus can stay in the body after the symptoms are gone, which means the disease can still be spread.

## How is it diagnosed and treated?

- Primary care provider evaluation
- Treatment is aimed at relief of symptoms

## How can it be prevented?

- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging, and sharing utensils with infected people
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as toys and doorknobs

## Should the sick individual be isolated?

- The spread of infection is extremely difficult to prevent and the condition is harmless. Although most individuals are contagious from 2 days before to 2 days after the rash, avoidance of other children is unnecessary unless a fever is present or there are sores in the mouth.

## When can the individual return to the general population?

- Temperature is below 100°F for at least 24hrs without medication
- No sores are present in the mouth

## Should facilities do special cleaning?

- Special cleaning is not necessary. Routine cleaning with EPA approved products is recommended on commonly touched surfaces.

## If I have any other questions, whom can I contact?

- Call the Genesee County Health Department at 810-257-1017