



One minute guide to...

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

What is it?

Hand, Foot and Mouth is usually a mild childhood disease, but can affect adults too. It usually gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days. The first signs are usually a high temperature, sore throat and not wanting to eat. A few days later mouth ulcers can appear along with a rash on the hands and feet.

How is it spread?

Hand, foot and mouth disease can be easily passed on to other people. It's spread through coughs, sneezes, poo and the fluid in the blisters.

You can start spreading it from a few days before you have symptoms, but you're most likely to spread it to others in the first 5 days after symptoms start.

Actions to take if you have it in your setting:

Do:

- Encourage everyone to wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after using the toilet (or changing nappies) and before eating, preparing, or handling food.
- Make paper towels available for drying hands.
- Use tissues to trap germs when you cough, sneeze, or wipe your nose.
- Bin used tissues as quickly as possible.
- Do not let children share towels or household items like cups or cutlery.

Attending school and early years settings:

- Children should stay at home if they have a high temperature or feel too unwell to attend school or their early years setting. Otherwise, they can attend as normal. There is no need to wait until any blisters have healed.

Hand, foot and mouth disease in pregnancy:

- Although there's usually no risk to the pregnancy or baby, it's best to avoid close contact with anyone who has hand, foot and mouth disease. If a pregnant member of staff does come into contact with someone with hand, foot and mouth disease, they should speak to their midwife for further advice.

Further Information:

NHS information: [Hand, foot and mouth disease - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Guide developed by the Education IPC, Public Health & Communities Team in Cumbria.

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