



# Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease: What You Need to Know!

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is a common viral illness that often affects infants and children younger than 5 years old, but it can also occur in older children and adults. It's usually mild and clears up on its own within 7 to 10 days.

## Symptoms to Watch For:

- **Fever:** Often the first sign.
- **Sore Throat:** Making it difficult to swallow.
- **Malaise:** A general feeling of discomfort or uneasiness.
- **Painful, Blister-like Sores:** Usually in the mouth, throat, and on the tongue.
- **Skin Rash:** Red spots, sometimes with blisters, on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. It can also appear on the buttocks.

## How It Spreads:

HFMD is highly contagious and spreads through:

- **Close Contact:** Such as hugging, kissing, or sharing utensils.
- **Respiratory Droplets:** From coughing or sneezing.
- **Fecal-Oral Route:** Contact with stool from an infected person.
- **Contaminated Objects:** Touching surfaces or objects that have the virus on them.

# Prevention is Key!

Here are some simple steps to help prevent the spread of HFMD:

- **Wash Your Hands Frequently:** Especially after changing diapers, using the toilet, and before eating.
- **Avoid Close Contact:** Don't kiss, hug, or share eating utensils with infected people.
- **Clean and Disinfect:** Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and contaminated items, like toys.
- **Stay Home When Sick:** Keep children home from school or daycare when they have symptoms of HFMD to prevent further spread.

## When to See a Doctor:

While HFMD is usually mild, it's important to contact your healthcare provider if:

- Your child is not drinking fluids and shows signs of dehydration.
- Symptoms worsen or don't improve after 7 to 10 days.
- Your child has a weakened immune system.
- You are concerned about your child's symptoms.

Stay informed and help keep our community healthy!

For more information, you can visit [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov) or consult your healthcare provider.

