



LAKELAND JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT #272

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Communicable Disease Fact Sheet

Fifth Disease (Erythema Infectiosum)

What is Fifth Disease?

- ◆ A viral infection caused by the Human Parvovirus-related to but not the same as dog parvovirus.
- ◆ It occurs in pre-school and school aged children.
- ◆ Called "Fifth Disease" because it was identified after red measles, German measles, scarlet fever and roseola.

Symptoms:

- ◆ About a week after exposure, the person develops a low-grade fever, which lasts 5-7 days, and then the child recovers with no other symptoms.
- ◆ About a week after the fever goes away, a distinctive rash may appear. It resembles the appearance of a slapped cheek and there is a faint, lacy rash on the trunk, arms and legs. Adults, especially women, may have joint pain and swelling at this state.
- ◆ The rash fades away in 1-2 weeks but may reoccur for several weeks brought on by exposure to sunlight, heat, exercise or stress.
- ◆ Often there is neither fever nor rash with this disease.

How is it spread?

- ◆ Droplets from respiratory secretions or secondarily by hands. About 50% of adults have had the disease as children and thus are immune.
- ◆ The most contagious period is just before onset of fever, gradually declining during the following week and low to absent by the time the rash appears.
- ◆ Incubation period is 1-2 weeks from initial exposure to infected person.

Treatment:

- ◆ No treatment is recommended.

Exclusion from school:

- ◆ Children with the rash of Fifth Disease do not need to be isolated because they are no longer contagious by the time the rash appears.
- ◆ Hand washing and proper tissue disposal should be scrupulously practiced

Alert for pregnant women:

- ◆ Pregnant women who are exposed to Fifth Disease in the first 4-5 months of pregnancy should notify their physician of exposure.

More Information:

- ◆ Contact your school nurse at your child's school or at the district office, 687-0431.
- ◆ Contact your health care provider.
- ◆ Contact Panhandle Health District at 667-3481.