HAND, FOOT, AND MOUTH DISEASE (HFMD)

SAS
SINGAPORE AMERICAN SCHOOL

Date: May 24, 2019

Dear Parent or Guardian,

There have been cases of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) reported in high school this week.

What is Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD)?

This is a disease caused by a group of viruses which usually affects young children under the age of 5. It usually starts with a fever, reduced appetite, sore throat and a feeling of being unwell. Painful sores may develop in the mouth 1 to 2 days after the fever, and may blister. A skin rash with red spots and sometimes, with blisters, may develop over 1 to 2 days on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, knees, elbows, and the buttocks or genital area.

How is HFMD spread?

The virus can be spread by the air through coughing or sneezing, blister fluid, and is also found in the faeces of infected children. Some children infected with the virus do not have symptoms but can still pass it to others. It is not transmitted to or from pets or other animals. Generally, a person with HFMD is most contagious during the first week of illness. They sometimes can be contagious for days or weeks after symptoms go away.

How is HFMD treated?

There is no specific treatment or vaccine for hand, foot and mouth disease – it is usually a mild and self-limiting illness. If a child feels unwell, pain relievers may help.

How can the spread of HFMD be prevented?

Some people may not develop any symptoms, but can still spread the virus to others. This is why it is important to maintain good hygiene at all times to minimize the chances of infection. Frequent handwashing can reduce the risk of spread. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and soiled items, including toys.

Should my child stay in school?

Children with HFMD should stay at home until the fluid in the blisters has dried. During this period, contact with other children should be avoided until the child recovers.

You may contact the school nurses with additional questions or concerns.

Kind regards,
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