



October 12, 2012

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Several cases of hand, foot, and mouth disease (HF&MD) have been diagnosed recently at the schools in Hampton Township. This letter is intended to make you aware of the signs and symptoms of HF&MD, its treatment, and measures to prevent its spread.

Hand, foot and mouth disease is moderately contagious and is spread through direct contact with the mucus, saliva, or feces of an infected person. It is a viral, not bacterial, infection.

The time between infection and the onset of symptoms is usually 3-7 days. The early symptoms are fever, often followed by a sore throat. Loss of appetite and fatigue may also occur. Between one and two days after the onset of fever, painful sores may appear in the mouth and/or throat. A rash may develop on the hands, feet, mouth, tongue, inside the cheeks, and occasionally on the buttocks.

There is no specific treatment for HF&MD. HF&MD is a viral illness that has to run its course, which is approximately one week. Analgesics such as Tylenol or ibuprofen may relieve the fever and pain caused by the sores of HF&MD, and fluids and salt-water rinses may soothe ulcers in the mouth.

Preventive measures include frequent hand washing, covering the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing, and not sharing eating and drinking equipment with others. These are the same measures recommended to prevent the spread of colds and the flu.

Students are encouraged to stay home from school if they have a fever and/or do not feel well, but may return to school when feeling better. We suggest you consult your child's physician should you suspect your child has HF&MD, for his/her recommendations.

Hampton Township School District has been in contact with the Allegheny County Health Department in regard to the incidence of HF&MD in our schools. We are encouraging good hygiene practices with our students. Locker rooms, desks, computer keyboards, etc. are frequently cleaned.

Please contact your child's school nurse or physician if you have further questions about hand, foot, and mouth disease.

Sincerely,

Amy Baxter, Mary Jane Rosek, and Nancy Silay  
HTSD Certified School Nurses