

Date_____

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Some children in your child's class have been diagnosed with fifth disease. Fifth disease (Erythema Infectiosum) is generally a very mild viral illness presenting in three stages. It usually begins with either no or very mild symptoms such as a runny nose and slight sore throat. This is followed by a characteristic rosy rash ("slapped cheek appearance") appearing on both cheeks. Shortly thereafter a "lace-like" rash can be seen on the torso, arms and legs. By the time the rash appears the child is no longer contagious. Contracting the disease usually confers life long immunity, that is, after having the disease a person is unlikely to get it again. Fifth disease does not require treatment. Over 50% of exposed children will come down with the rash within 10 to 14 days. Because the disease is mainly contagious during the week before the rash begins, a child who has the rash is no longer contagious and does not need to stay home from school. Fifth disease can be a cause for concern for pregnant women in that it can complicate the pregnancy. You should notify your physician if you are pregnant and have been exposed to a child with fifth disease. Please feel free to contact me at the school if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

School Nurse