



Greenwich Public Schools  
School Health Services

## **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie A-16 Virus)**

There has been Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie A-16 Virus) diagnosed in your child's classroom. Coxsackie is a viral infection that is about as contagious as the common cold and generally occurs during the summer and early fall in children usually under ten (10) years old. Antibiotics have no effect on this virus. The blistering rash is seen on the hands, feet and inside the mouth.

### **Signs/Symptoms:**

Tiny blisters in or around the mouth and on fingers, palms of the hands, buttocks, and soles of the feet lasting longer than a week. One, a few or many blisters in all those areas may be present. You may see common cold signs and symptoms with fever, sore throat, runny nose and cough. Mouth blisters are the most troublesome, making eating and drinking difficult.

### **Incubation:**

3-6 days.

### **Transmission:**

Coughing and sneezing, direct contact and fecal-oral route spread the virus. Frequent hand washing, covering your mouth when coughing and sneezing and always washing your hands after using the bathroom will decrease the spread of the virus.

### **Treatment:**

1. No specific treatment. This viral infection does not respond to antibiotics. Treatment is aimed at fever control and drinking enough fluids.
2. Your physician may recommend fever-reducing medication. As with other viral infections, **DO NOT GIVE CHILDREN ASPIRIN PRODUCTS.**
3. Blisters heal better if not opened.
4. Wash your hands and your child's hands frequently.
5. For problems with eating and drinking:
  - a. Offer only cool bland liquids; soda and strong juices will be too uncomfortable as they "burn" the mouth.
  - b. Offer soft, bland, non-spicy foods that are not hot (i.e. buttered pasta, soft bread, puddings, etc).
  - c. For very painful mouth blisters consult your physician.

**General Information:**

- Please report episodes of confirmed Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie) to the nurse's office as soon as possible. Please contact us even if your child developed Mononucleosis on a non-school day (weekend, holiday).
- There is no vaccine for this virus. Infection with Coxsackie virus generally provides future immunity to the Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease. A second episode is possible from a different subtype (related form) of Coxsackie virus.

**Return to School:**

- Students must be fever-free for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication.. **We reserve the right to send a student home who displays signs of ill health that may jeopardize the general welfare of the class.**

If you have any questions, please call your School Nurse.