Dear parent or guardian:

Your child recently may have been exposed to **hand, foot, and mouth disease** (HFMD). It is a common viral infection that is usually mild. It is not related to hoof–and–mouth disease of cattle.

Keep children home if they have a fever or are too sick to take part in normal activities.

# Symptoms

Symptoms include tiny blisters in the mouth, fingers, palms, buttocks, and feet. Children and adults sometimes experience fever, sore throat, runny nose, and cough. Blisters in the mouth can make it difficult to eat and drink.

# Spread

HFMD spreads through coughing, sneezing, or contact with an infected person’s poop. The fluid from open or weeping blisters can also spread the disease.

# Diagnosis and treatment

A healthcare provider can diagnose HFMD. No specific treatment is available. A healthcare provider may recommend medication to provide relief from fever or pain. Make sure the child gets plenty of rest and fluids. Eating soft foods and avoiding spicy or salty foods can be helpful for children with mouth sores.

# Prevention

Good hand hygiene is the best way to prevent the spread of HFMD:

* Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and warm water. Antibacterial soap is not necessary.
* Wash your hands after using the bathroom or using a tissue.
* After changing a diaper, wash both your hands and the baby’s hands.
* Teach children to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.
* Throw tissues away after each use.
* Avoid touching your eyes, mouth, and nose.
* Clean frequently touched surfaces, like doorknobs and toys, often.
* Do not share utensils, drinking cups, napkins, brushes, or towels.

# Learn more

For more info, contact a healthcare provider.