



Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child may have recently been exposed to hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD). Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a mild illness most often caused by the Coxsackie A16 virus. Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a common childhood illness characterized by fever, sores in the mouth, and a rash with blisters on the hands and feet.

HFMD begins with a low fever, poor appetite, and often a sore throat. Sores in the mouth may appear on the tongue, gums, and inside of the cheeks. A couple of days later a skin rash may appear on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, and occasionally the buttocks. The virus is found in the nose and throat secretions, saliva, blister fluid, and stool of infected persons. It is most common in the summer and early fall months. Although the name of this illness sounds similar to hoof-and-mouth disease of cattle, HFMD is a completely unrelated illness caused by a different virus. The infection usually goes away without any serious complications within 7 to 10 days. In very rare occasions, complications of viral meningitis or encephalitis may occur.

Most children diagnosed with HFMD do not need to be excluded from child care or school. Young children with mouth sores or children with open sores on their hands that cannot be covered may be excluded. If you believe your child may have HFMD notify your medical provider immediately. Please call the Snohomish Health District's Communicable Disease Outreach program at 425.339.5278 if you have any questions regarding this letter or any other health and safety issues.

*This letter was printed from the Snohomish Health District's website. If your child's caregiver has provided you with this notice and you have additional questions, call Communicable Disease Outreach at 425.339.5278. This letter is reviewed annually. This document is not valid after 06/2012.*