

HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE / STOMATITIS

What is hand, foot and mouth disease?

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a disease caused by a virus. The disease causes sores in the mouth as well as blisters on the hands and feet. It mainly occurs in children age 6 months to 4 years. Sometimes sores are seen only in the mouth (stomatitis).

Symptoms can include:

- small, painful ulcers in the mouth
- small water blisters or red spots located on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet, and on the webs between the fingers and toes
- 5 or fewer blisters per hand or foot
- sometimes, small blisters or red spots on the buttocks
- a fever between 100°F and 102°F (37.8°C and 38.9°C)

What is the cause?

Hand, foot and mouth disease is always caused by the Coxsackie A-16 virus. It has no relationship to hoof and mouth disease of cattle. Stomatitis (mouth irritation only) can be caused by either Coxsackie virus or other types of viruses.

How long does it last?

The fever and discomfort are usually gone in 3 or 4 days. The mouth ulcers will heal in about 7 days, but the rash on the hands and feet can last 10 days. The only complication seen with any frequency is dehydration from children refusing to drink fluids.

How can I take care of my child?

- **Antacid solution for pain relief**

For every young child, put ½ teaspoon-2 teaspoons of an antacid solution (**Maalox OR Mylanta**) in the front of the mouth four times a day after meals. Children over age 4 can use 1 teaspoon- 1 Tablespoon of an antacid solution as a mouthwash after meals. Commonly, an age appropriate dose of **Benadryl** (diphenhydramine) can be added to the antacid to add to the soothing effect.

- **Diet**

Offer a soft diet. Use a cup instead of a bottle to give fluids to very young children. Cold drinks, milkshakes, popsicles, and sherbert are good choices. Avoid citrus, salty or spicy foods.

- **Medication**

Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen for severe mouth pain or fever over 102°F (38.9°C).

- **Contagiousness**

Hand, foot and mouth disease is quite contagious. Usually some of your child's playmates will develop it at about the same time. The incubation period after contact is 3 to 6 days. Because the spread of infection is extremely difficult to prevent and the condition is harmless, these children do not need to be isolated. They can return to daycare or school when the fever returns to normal. While most children are contagious from 2 days before to 2 days after the rash, avoiding other children is unnecessary.

Copyright© McKesson Health Solutions LLC

When should I call my child's health care provider?

Call IMMEDIATELY if:

- Your child has not urinated for more than 12 hours or you feel shows signs of dehydration
- Your child starts acting very sick

Call during office hours if:

- The fever lasts more than 3 days
- You have other concerns or questions

FOR MOUTH SORES OR MOUTH DISCOMFORT FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS BELOW. THIS COMBINATION WORKS WELL TO COAT AND NUMB MOUTH AND ENCOURAGES DRINKING AND EATING AS WELL AS REDUCES PAIN.

1. OBTAIN **ADULT MAALOX OR MYLANTA** (EITHER BRAND WILL WORK; PICK A KID-FRIENDLY FLAVOR SUCH AS BERRY)



2. MIX WITH EQUAL PARTS OF **CHILDREN'S BENADRYL** (EXAMPLE: 1 OUNCE OF MAALOX TO 1 OUNCE OF BENADRYL)



3. PLACE MIXTURE IN CHILD'S MOUTH OR ALLOW CHILD TO SWISH AND SWALLOW MIXTURE UP TO 4X DAILY (WHEN HAVING DISCOMFORT OR AROUND MEALTIMES ARE BEST)
 - USE 2.5 mL of mixture for children 0-1 year old

- USE 5 mL of mixture for children 1-4 years old
- USE 10 mL of mixture for children 4-10 years old
- USE 20 mL of mixture for children 10 years and older