

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

There has been a reported case of Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD or Coxsackie Virus) in your child's classroom. Despite its scary name, this illness is typically mild. This is a viral disease characterized by sudden onset of fever, sore throat and small, grayish sores in the mouth that may also be on the gums and the sides of the tongue. The sores can last from 7 to 10 days and can also occur on the palms of the hands, fingers, soles of the feet and occasionally on the buttocks. The most troublesome findings often are the blisters in the mouth, which make it difficult for the child to eat or drink.

The virus is spread through coughing and sneezing, through the fluid from blisters on the hands and feet, or through contact with the infected person's stool (feces). Children with HFMD generally do not need to be excluded from school or childcare unless the child is particularly uncomfortable and is not able to participate in normal school or childcare activities.

A health care provider can identify HFMD by the symptoms reported and the appearance and location of the blisters. No specific treatment is available. Symptoms may be treated to provide relief from fever or pain from the mouth blisters. A person is considered contagious during the first stages of illness and could pass the virus in their stool for several months.

Preventative measures include making sure adults and children wash hands frequently and thoroughly both at home and in school. Teach children to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue or their arm when coughing or sneezing. When using a tissue, wash hands well afterwards. Dispose of tissues that contain nasal secretions after each use.

Please consult your health care provider if you or any member of your family has symptoms of this disease.