



2096 Red Arrow Trail  
Madison, WI 53711  
608-275-6740

## Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

### Communicable Disease Exposure Notice

Dear Parents:

Your child may have been exposed to the communicable disease **Hand, foot and mouth** in a Reach Dane/Reach Green classroom on the following date \_\_\_\_\_.

Please review the information below. If you have any questions, or if your child begins experiencing symptoms of the illness, contact your child's primary care provider or one of the agencies listed below.

Public Health – Madison & Dane County

(608) 266-4821

Green County Health Department

(608) 328-9390

#### **What is hand, foot and mouth disease?**

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a mild viral illness that can occur at any age, occurring most often in children under age 5. Symptoms are usually mild and resolve on their own in 7 to 10 days. Some people, especially young children, may get dehydrated if they are not able to swallow enough liquids because of the painful mouth sores associated with hand, foot and mouth disease. Most cases of hand, foot and mouth disease occur in summer and fall.

#### **What are the symptoms of hand, foot and mouth disease?**

Hand, foot and mouth disease usually starts with a fever, poor appetite, and sore throat. One or two days after fever starts, painful sores usually develop in the mouth. They begin as small red spots that blister and that often become ulcers. A skin rash also develops, usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, but may also appear on the knees, elbow, buttocks or genital area.

#### **How does a person get hand, foot and mouth disease?**

The disease is spread from person to person by direct contact with nose or throat discharges or stool during the acute stage of the illness. The virus can continue to be transmitted in the stool perhaps as long as several weeks after the onset of infection when a person has no apparent illness.

#### **How long does it take to develop hand, foot and mouth disease following exposure?**

Symptoms usually begin 3-5 days after contact with an infected person, object or surface.



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### **How is hand, foot and mouth disease treated?**

Hand, foot and mouth disease is usually self-limiting and does not require treatment. Persons with the disease should rest. They may be given liquids and medication to control fever or pain associated with the disease. (Caution: Aspirin should not be given to children). Drinking liquids is important to stay hydrated. If a child is drinking a limited amount of liquids, contact your health care provider.

### **How long is a child with hand, foot and mouth disease excluded from childcare?**

Children are excluded from day care until the infected child is 24 hours fever free without the use of fever-reducing medication.

### **How can I limit the spread of hand, foot and mouth disease?**

All children and adults should practice good hand washing technique, especially following contact with nose or throat discharge, stool, or blister fluid from an infected person.