Date

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child may have recently been exposed to **Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD)**. HFMD is a common viral infection that most often causes outbreaks in the summer and fall. Although the name sounds like hoof-and-mouth disease of cattle, HFMD is completely unrelated.

**What are the symptoms of HFMD?**

Despite its scary name, this illness generally is mild. Symptoms include tiny blisters in the mouth and on the fingers, palms of hands, buttocks, and soles of the feet. Fever, sore throat, runny nose, and cough (like a common cold) may also be present. The blisters in the mouth can make it difficult for the child to eat or drink.

**How is HFMD spread?**

The virus is spread through coughing and sneezing and through the fluid from blisters on the hands and feet. Contact with the infected person’s stool (feces) can also spread HFMD.

**How is HFMD diagnosed and treated?**

A health care provider can identify HFMD by the child's symptoms and the appearance and location of the blisters. No specific treatment is available. Your doctor might suggest treatment to provide relief from fever or pain from the mouth blisters.

**How do you control the spread?**

* Ensure adults and children wash hands frequently and thoroughly with warm water and soap.
* After using the bathroom, wash hands thoroughly with warm water and soap.
* After changing a diaper, wash both your hands and the baby’s hands with warm water and soap.
* Teach children to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue or their arm when coughing or sneezing.
* After using a tissue, wash hands well.
* Dispose of tissues after each use.
* Clean frequently touched surfaces often.
* Exclusion of children with HFMD from school and childcare is generally not necessary.
* If the child is too sick to take part in normal activities, they should be kept at home.

**How do I get more information?**

For more information about Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease, contact your healthcare provider.