



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

In the Pursuit of Extraordinary Governance...

FACT SHEET HAND, FOOT, & MOUTH DISEASE

(Herpangina; Coxsackievirus A-16)

What is Herpangina?	Herpangina (also called hand, foot & mouth disease) is an infection caused by a virus. It occurs most often in children under age 10, and is generally mild.
How is it spread?	It is spread from person-to-person by direct contact with nose and throat droplets/discharges (coughing, sneezing, drooling) or feces of infected people. Herpangina is most common in the summer and fall.
What is the incubation period?	Symptoms usually appear 3-6 days after exposure.
What are the early signs?	Early signs include a sudden fever, sore throat, cough, and headache. 1-2 days after the fever, small blisters or ulcer-like sores in the mouth/throat and/or on the hands/feet may appear.
What about people who come in contact with the ill person?	If children who have been in contact with an ill individual become ill, parents should check with their family doctor to rule out other serious rash illnesses.
How long is the person contagious?	Herpangina is most contagious during the first week of illness and may persist in stool for several weeks. Recovery is usually 7-10 days.
When is it OK to return to daycare/school?	As long as the fluid from blisters can be contained, children only need to be excluded from school if they have a fever. It is okay to return to school when the child no longer has a fever and feels well enough to participate in class.
Other Important Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Since the virus may remain in stool for several weeks, encourage children to wash hands well after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food.• Thoroughly clean surfaces or items that come in contact with drool or fluid from blisters/rash.• Cover nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and dispose of used tissues in garbage.

This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child's health. If you have general questions, you may contact a Kalamazoo County nurse at 373-5022 or 373-5267.

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