

## **Factsheet on hand, foot and mouth disease**

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

This is a mild infection caused by a virus that usually affects young children.

### **What are the symptoms?**

It causes blisters on the hands and feet, and mouth ulcers.

Those affected may have a sore mouth and develop a high temperature.

Symptoms usually start 3 – 5 days after contact with someone with the virus and last up to 10 days.

### **Is it the same as foot and mouth disease in cows?**

No. Foot and Mouth disease in cows is caused by a completely different virus.

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

The virus is spread by coughs and sneezes, and by contact with poo or with blisters of infected children.

### **How can spread be prevented?**

Since the virus is found in poo, hand washing after using the toilet is really important.

While a child has blisters, they should not share towels with other people.

### **Is there any treatment?**

There is no specific treatment for Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease – it is usually a mild illness.

### **Do children need to stay off school or nursery?**

The best way to prevent spreading the virus is to follow the advice above. Children may attend school or nursery when they feel well enough.

Keeping children off school/nursery for longer than this is unlikely to stop the virus spreading. There may be other children in the school or nursery who appear well but who are spreading the virus.

Further advice on any of the contents of this leaflet may be obtained from your community infection prevention and control team or Greater Manchester health protection team:

This factsheet has been reviewed by a multi-disciplinary team from the North West and local Programme lead from Greater Manchester Health Protection Team:

**Further information may be available from [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)**