Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

You or your child has hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFM). This is an illness caused by a virus. It causes fever, small painful ulcers in the mouth, and spots or blisters may form on the palms, the feet, or the buttocks. A low grade fever for 2-3 days is common. The sores in the mouth and skin may last for 7-10 days. Hand, foot, and mouth disease is contagious, however, you or your child may go back to school and work when the temperature is back to normal.

The main problem with this disease is dehydration in children because the mouth sores make drinking painful. Keep your child comfortable, use medication for pain and fever as directed by your caregiver. Avoid citrus juices and salty or spicy foods. Give lots of cool liquids and foods that are easily chewed. Have your child rinse the mouth out with warm water after eating.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOUR CHILD DEVELOPS:

- A high fever or one that lasts more than 3 days.
- Signs of dehydration such as weakness, fainting or poor urine flow.
- Severe pain, restlessness, or marked fussiness.
- Any other questions or concerns.

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