Hand, Foot and Mouth

Hand, foot and mouth disease is caused by a group of viruses which usually affects young children. It causes blisters on hands and feet, and mouth ulcers inside the cheeks and on the tongue. They may also have a sore throat and high temperature. These symptoms last for 7-10 days.

Check if it's hand, foot and mouth disease. The first symptoms of hand, foot and mouth disease can be, a sore throat, a high temperature or not wanting to eat. The second stage usually starts a few days later and symptoms can include, mouth ulcers, a raised rash of spots on the hands and feet, and sometimes the groin area and bottom. The spots can turn into blisters, which might be grey or lighter than surrounding skin and can be painful.

Hand, foot and mouth disease is easily passed on to other people. It's spread in coughs, sneezes, faeces and the fluid in the blisters. You can get it more than once. You can start spreading it from a few days before you have any symptoms, but you're most likely to spread it to others in the first 5 days after symptoms start.

If we suspect a child has hand, foot and mouth, parents will be contacted and asked to collect them. A child with hand, foot, and mouth disease should stay home from nursery from the first day symptoms appear until day 5.

Before returning to nursery they should:

- not have a fever
- have no new sores and or blisters no new blisters appear
- have any old blisters healed over,
- not have excessive dribbling
- have no mouth ulcers.

To reduce the risk of spreading hand, foot and mouth disease, wash your hands often with soap and water, and children's hands too, use tissues to trap germs when you cough or sneeze, bin used tissues as quickly as possible, do not share towels or household items like cups or cutlery, wash soiled bedding and clothing on a hot wash.

To seek further advice, you can speak to your health visitor, a local pharmacist, or call NHS 111 for further guidance.