

What you should know

WHAT IS HAND, FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE?

HFMD is an illness caused by intestinal viruses, the more common strains being Coxsackie A virus and Enterovirus 71 (EV71).

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

- Fever
- Sore throat
- Poor appetite
- Lethargy
- Rash (flat or raised spots) or small blisters on palms of hands, soles of feet, and/or buttocks
- Ulcers on the inside of the mouth or sides of the tongue



HOW IS IT TRANSMITTED?

HFMD is spread from person to person by direct contact with the nasal discharge, saliva, faeces and fluid from the rash of an infected person.

DOES IT AFFECT ONLY CHILDREN?

No, although it is extremely uncommon in adults. Young children under the age of five are the most susceptible.

Most cases of HFMD are mild. However, HFMD caused by EV71 may be associated with serious complications involving the nervous system and heart, leading to death.

HOW IS IT TREATED?

Treatment with antibiotics is not effective. There is no specific treatment, but medication is available to relieve the fever and pain. Resting at home and drinking plenty of fluids will aid the recovery process. If mouth ulcers are a problem, a soft diet with food like porridge may be more easy to consume.

PREVENTIVE MEASURES



Wash hands frequently with soap before eating and after going to the toilet



Cover the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing



Do not share food and drinks, utensils, toothbrushes or towels with others



Clean and disinfect toys and appliances thoroughly