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HAND, FOOT, and MOUTH DISEASE

This is an infection caused by a virus, coxsackie virus, which occurs mainly in children. It is a mild illness that can be spread through saliva or from an infected child's bowel movements.

Symptoms can include:

Fever, usually lower grade (102 or less)	Small mildly painful ulcers in the mouth
Sore throat	Headache
Refusal to eat or drink	Blisters on the hands, feet, face, or buttocks

The fever and the discomfort usually disappear in three to four days, and the mouth ulcers usually improve within seven days. The rash can last up to ten days. The major complication of this infection is dehydration.

Treatment can include:

Encouraging lots of liquids for your child. Cool liquids are preferable. Soft foods are often more easily tolerated. Avoid citrus (such as OJ or lemonade), spicy or salty foods, as these will irritate the mouth.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil / Motrin) if needed for fever or pain.

Your doctor may recommend a mixture of 1 part benadryl liquid and 1 part Maalox or Mylanta liquid. If so, use as directed by your doctor.

Smaller, more frequent meals and beverages.

Good hand washing.

Avoid sharing utensils or drinking glasses with other people.

Your child can return to school or daycare once the fever has been gone for 24 hours and he or she is drinking well.

Call our office if:

You are concerned that your child is getting dehydrated (dry lips, sunken eyes, no tears when crying, decreased urine output).

The fever lasts more than three to four days.

Your child is very irritable or difficult to console.

Your child develops any other symptoms or worsening pain.

For any urgent or emergent medical concerns, please call 911 or go immediately to the nearest emergency department.