

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease



Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

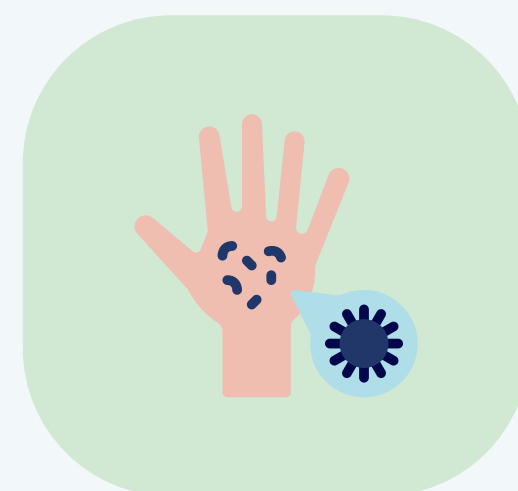
It is a non-dangerous but highly contagious viral disease that spreads quickly in schools and nurseries. It is common in infants and children under the age of 5, but it can affect older children and adults. Most people infected with it experience mild symptoms for 7 to 10 days.

Modes of Transmission:

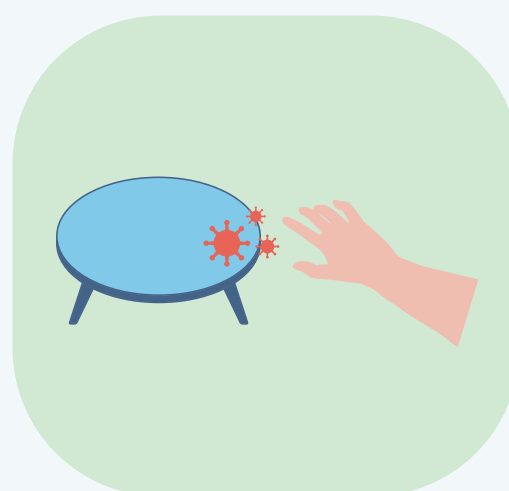
When infected, the virus present in nasal and throat secretions (such as saliva or nasal mucus), and the fluid that comes out of blisters and feces can spread through:



Respiratory system, such as droplets released during coughing or sneezing, and nasal and mouth secretions



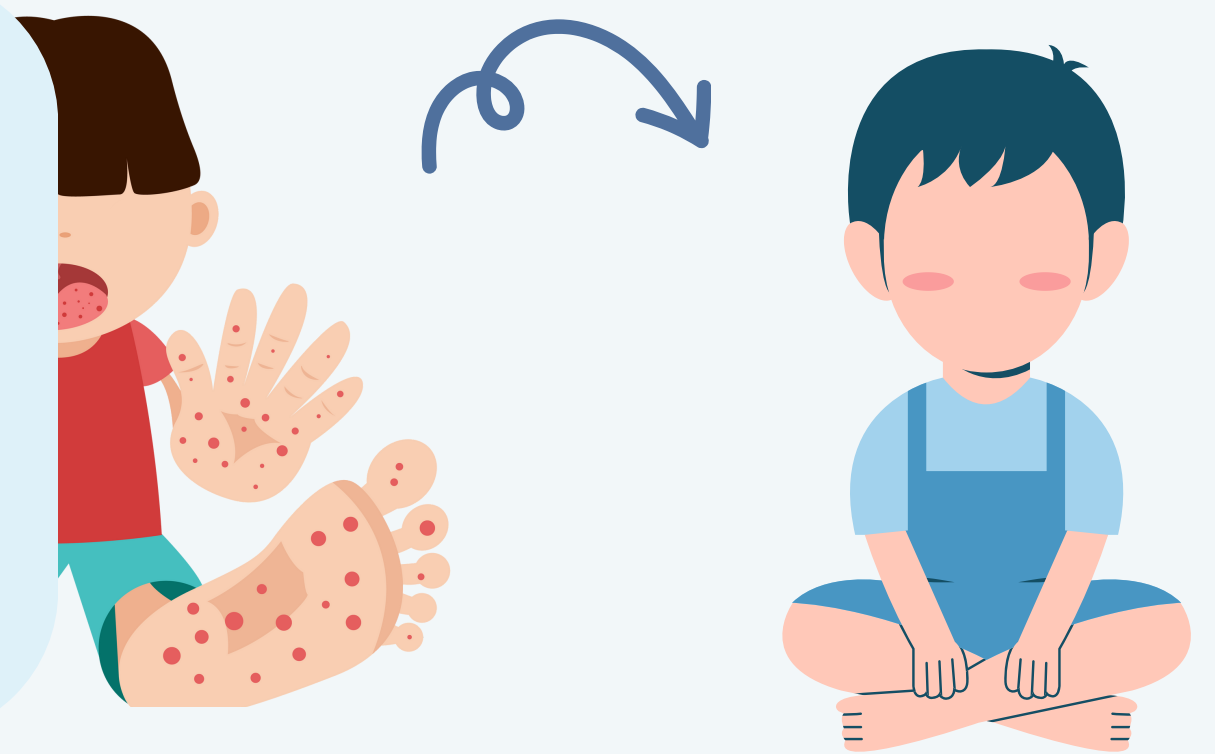
Direct contact with an infected person (skin contact, sharing cups or eating utensils)



Indirect contact such as touching contaminated surfaces or materials (pencils, countertops, tissues, clothing, or door handles) and then touching the eyes, mouth, or nose

Infectious Period:

Infected people are usually most contagious during the first week, but can spread the virus to others for days or weeks after symptoms disappear, or even when no symptoms appear at all.



Symptoms:



Fever and flu-like symptoms



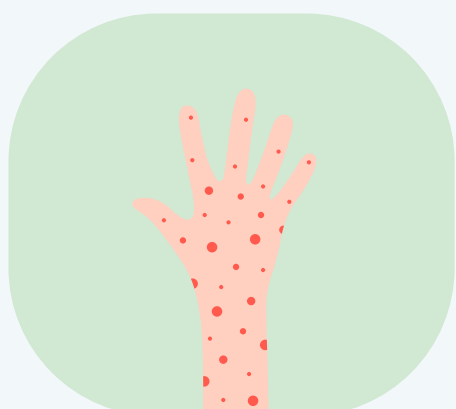
Drooling more than usual



Mouth ulcers, often on the tongue and inside the mouth, which can become painful



Inability to swallow and desire to drink only cold liquids



Rash (this type of rash usually doesn't cause itching and looks like flat, fluid-filled red spots). It appears on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, and can appear on the buttocks, legs, and arms as well.

When should you see a doctor?



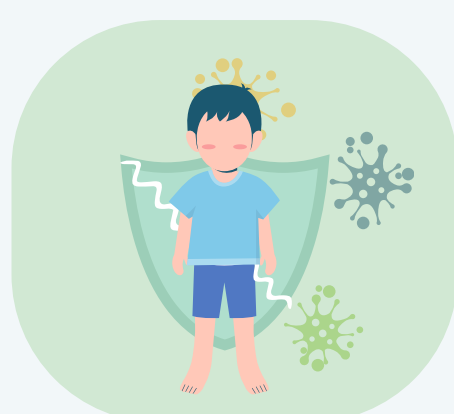
Symptoms do not improve after 10 days



When the affected person is an infant less than 6 months old



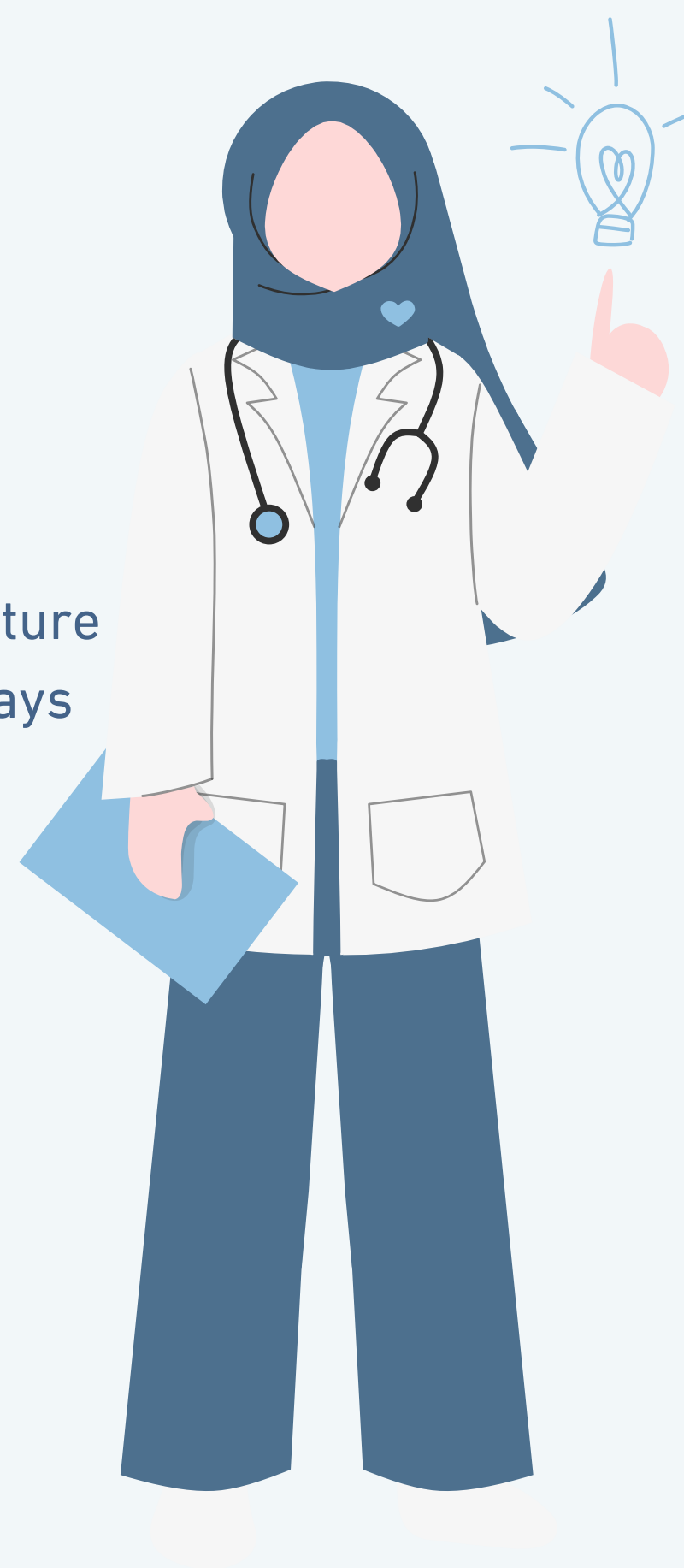
High body temperature for more than 3 days



If the child suffers from a weak immune system



The child is unable to drink normally



Treatment:

Most people with hand, foot, and mouth disease get better on their own within 7 to 10 days. There is no specific medical treatment for the disease, but some steps can be taken to relieve symptoms and prevent dehydration:



Give the child medications that help reduce fever and relieve pain resulting from mouth ulcers



Drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration

Methods of prevention:



Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available



Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



Teach children how to wash hands, help them and make sure they wash them correctly



Always wash hands after changing diapers, after using the bathroom, after coughing or sneezing, and before and after caring for someone who is sick



Avoid close contact with people who are sick (e.g. hugging)



Help children keep blisters clean and avoid touching them



Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and shared objects (such as door handles)



Avoid touching eyes, nose, mouth, and unclean hands

Instructions for infected people with hand, foot, and mouth disease:



Use tissues when coughing or sneezing and dispose them in the designated place



Wash hands with soap and water, especially children



Allow the blisters to dry naturally, avoiding touching, playing with, or squeezing them



Isolate the child for at least 7 days or until the fever and rash disappear



Avoid sharing towels or household items (such as cups or cutlery)



Wash bedding and dirty clothes with hot water



Avoid hot or acidic foods and drinks



Eat soft foods (such as mashed potatoes, yogurt, and soup) if you have difficulty swallowing



Clean and sterilize toys that may have come into contact with the child's saliva



Protect other children at the home by not having close contact with the infected child (eg: kissing, hugging, sharing cups and utensils)

Stay Healthy