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Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD)



Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a common viral illness that usually affects infants and children younger than 5 years old. However, it can sometimes occur in adults. Symptoms of hand, foot, and mouth disease include fever, mouth sores, and a skin rash. [Read more...](#)

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease Topics

[About Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease](#)

Describes the disease, its symptoms, complications, how it spreads, how it is diagnosed, prevention, treatment...

[Outbreaks](#)

Provides basic information about cases and outbreaks of hand, foot, and mouth disease...

[References & Resources](#)

Provides references to scientific articles and educational materials...

[Multimedia](#)

Lists a feature story and podcast...

Prevention

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is spread from person to person through nose and throat secretions (such as saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus), blister fluid, or stool of infected persons. You can lower your risk of being infected by

- Washing your hands often with soap and water
- Disinfecting dirty surfaces and soiled items

- Avoiding close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with infected persons

Commonly Confused With Foot-and-Mouth Disease

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is often confused with foot-and-mouth disease, a disease of cattle, sheep, and swine. However, the two diseases are caused by different viruses and are not related. Humans do not get the animal disease, and animals do not get the human disease.

Outbreaks of Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

Large outbreaks of hand, foot, and mouth disease are not common in the United States. However, in some countries in Asia, outbreaks are large and occur often. Thousands of people may get infected. Some people, particularly young children, may have severe disease requiring hospitalization or even causing death. Travelers to these countries can protect themselves by practicing personal hygiene tips. [Learn more](#).

To learn more about outbreaks occurring in countries in Asia, visit the [World Health Organization](#) .

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