

SWANLEA SCHOOL

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Dear Parent/Carer

We have been made aware that there have been several cases of Hand Foot & Mouth Disease in local schools in Tower Hamlets. Therefore, we thought it would be useful to share with you information from the NHS website.

Hand, foot and mouth disease is a common childhood illness that can also affect adults. It usually gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days. Hand, foot and mouth disease is **not** the same as foot and mouth disease that affects farm animals.

Check if it's hand, foot and mouth disease:

The 1st symptoms of hand, foot and mouth disease can be:

- A sore throat
- A high temperature
- Not wanting to eat

The 2nd stage usually starts a few days later and symptoms can include:

- Mouth ulcers, which can be painful
 - A raised rash of spots on the hands and feet, and sometimes the groin area and bottom
- The rash of spots can look pink, red, or darker than the surrounding skin, depending on your skin tone.
The spots can turn into blisters, which might be grey or lighter than surrounding skin and can be painful.
Symptoms are usually mild and are the same in adults and children.

How to treat hand, foot and mouth disease yourself:

Hand, foot and mouth disease usually gets better on its own in 7 to 10 days. You cannot take antibiotics or other medicines to cure it. To help the symptoms:

- Drink cool fluids to soothe the mouth and prevent dehydration (but avoid acidic drinks, such as fruit juice)
- Eat soft foods like yoghurt and avoid hot, salty and spicy foods
- Take paracetamol or ibuprofen to help ease a sore mouth or throat

A pharmacist can help with hand, foot and mouth disease. Ask a pharmacist for advice about treatments, such as mouth ulcer gels, sprays and mouthwashes, to relieve pain. They can tell you which ones are suitable for children.

How to stop hand, foot and mouth disease spreading:

Hand, foot and mouth disease is easily passed on to other people. It's spread in coughs, sneezes, poo 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. 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**

Staying off school:

Keep your child off school while they're feeling too unwell to go. But as soon as they're feeling better, they can go back to school. There's no need to wait until all the blisters have healed.

Keeping your child away from other children for longer is unlikely to stop the illness spreading.

We hope you find this information helpful.

Yours faithfully



Kabir Miah
Head of School



Brenda Landers
Executive Head