



# Technical Bulletin

## Division of Public and Behavioral Health



**Date: October 13, 2014**

**Topic: Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease Overview and Reporting**

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**To: Medical and Childcare Facilities**

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### **Background:**

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, herpangina, and a skin rash.

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is caused by viruses that belong to the enterovirus genus (group). This group of viruses includes polioviruses, coxsackieviruses, echoviruses, and enteroviruses.

- Coxsackievirus A16 is the most common cause of hand, foot, and mouth disease in the United States, but other coxsackieviruses have been associated with the illness. Coxsackievirus A6 has been circulating in the community since 2012.
- Enterovirus 71 has also been associated with hand, foot, and mouth disease and outbreaks of this disease.

### **Signs and Symptoms:**

- Fever
- Poor appetite
- Malaise
- Sore throat
- Herpangina
- Skin rash (usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet; it may also appear on the knees, elbows, buttocks or genital area)

### **Transmission:**

The viruses that cause hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) can be found in an infected person's:

- Nose and throat secretions (such as saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus),
- Blister fluid, and,
- Feces (stool)

An infected person may spread the viruses that cause hand, foot, and mouth disease through:

- Close personal contact, the air (through coughing or sneezing), contact with feces, contaminated objects and surfaces

### **Prevention and Treatment:**

A person can lower their risk of being infected by:

- Washing hands often with soap and water, especially after changing diapers and using the toilet.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and soiled items, including toys
- Avoiding close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with people with hand, foot, and mouth disease

There is no specific treatment for hand, foot and mouth disease. However, some things can be done to relieve symptoms, such as

- Taking over-the-counter medications to relieve pain and fever (Caution: Aspirin should not be given to children.)
- Using mouthwashes or sprays that numb mouth pain

**Reporting:**

Though coxsackieviruses are not reportable in Nevada, it is reportable in the event of an outbreak. "Outbreak" means the occurrence of cases in a community, geographic region or particular population at a rate in excess of that which is normally expected in that community, geographic region or particular population (NAC 441A.130). To report an outbreak, please contact the local health authority in your jurisdiction:

- Las Vegas area: Southern Nevada Health District, 702.759.1300
- Reno/Sparks area: Washoe County Health District, 775.328.2447
- Carson City, Douglas, and Lyon Counties: Carson City Health and Human Services, 775.887.2190
- Other counties: Rural Community Health Services, 775.687.5162 (business hours) or 775.434.4358 (after hours)
- State of Nevada Epidemiology Duty Officer (24 hours): 775.400.0333



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