NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S
When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.℠

Helping Hand™

Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease

Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease is a fairly common childhood illness caused by a virus. Usually, it affects young children, but is sometimes seen in adolescents or adults. This is a mild illness; symptoms usually go away without treatment in 5 to 7 days. Most outbreaks occur in the summer and fall.

Signs and Symptoms

- The throat and tonsils develop small painful sores (ulcers).
- The hands, feet and diaper area have a rash of very small blisters (vesicles) or red spots. The tiny blisters are usually on the palms of the hands or soles of the feet. They are tender or painful if pressed.
- Fever is common.
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Poor appetite

Picture 1 It is important to give liquids.

Treatment

Antibiotics are not effective against this virus. Suggestions for symptom relief include:

- Acetaminophen (such as Tylenol®) may be used for the headache, fever, and sore throat.
- Ibuprofen (such as Advil®, Motrin®) may also be used for children ages 6 months and older.
- Aspirin should not be used in viral illnesses in children under age 18 years.
- Salt water mouth rinses (1/2 teaspoon of salt to 1 glass of warm water) may be soothing if your child is able to rinse without swallowing.
- For children over one year of age, give lots of liquids, such as water, milk, and popsicles. Avoid fruit juices (such as orange juice) that are high in acid. These may irritate the mouth sores.
- For children under one year, give breast milk, formula, or Pedialyte®.

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When to Call the Doctor

Call your child's doctor for any of the following symptoms:

- Mouth sores can cause difficulty swallowing, which may lead to dehydration. Signs of dehydration include dry skin or lips, an infant's "soft spot" pulling in, or a child not making tears when crying.
- Your child has not had a wet diaper for 4 to 6 hours for babies and toddlers or has not needed to urinate in the past 6 to 8 hours for older children.
- Your child does not improve in a few days
- Neck pain or chest pain
- Fever (temperatures over 100.4°) that do not come down with medication
- Seizures or lethargy

Prevention

Body fluids of an infected person can spread the virus. These include mucous from the nose, saliva, fluid from the sores, and traces of bowel movements.

- Infected people are most likely to spread the infection during the first week of their illness.
- Good hand-washing habits with soap and water, especially after using the toilet, are the most important ways to prevent infection.
- Disinfect bathrooms, toys, and other objects that your child touches.

Questions

1. **Page 1, Treatment, bullet points 1 & 2: Use ibuprofen and acetaminophen at the same time?**
2. **Page 1, Treaatment, bullet point 4: What size glass?**
3. **Page 2, When to Call the Doctor, bullet point 4: neck and chest pain for how long? How severe?**