

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (23) in DH/SEB/CD/8/22/1

來函檔號 Your Ref. :

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2 November 2007

To Principals / Persons-in-charge,

Recent rise in Hand-foot-mouth Disease (HFMD) activity

In view of the recent increase in HFMD activity, I would like to urge your vigilance against HFMD outbreaks in your institution/organization.

HFMD is a viral infection commonly seen in children. A total of 21 institutional HFMD outbreaks have been reported to the Centre for Health Protection in October, compared with 8 and 9 institutional outbreaks in August and September respectively this year. The main symptoms of HFMD are fever, sore throat and skin rash over the hands and feet. Although the illness is self-limiting in most cases, some cases may be caused by EV71 virus and may be associated with complications like myocarditis, encephalitis or poliomyelitis-like paralysis. No specific treatment is available for HFMD. Good hygiene practices are the most important measures to prevent HFMD.

To prevent HFMD outbreak in your institution, I would recommend you taking the following steps:

1. Maintain good communication with parents and help them to understand the need to keep children at home for rest when they develop fever and rash.
2. Encourage staff to screen for sick children before they enter the school. Children with HFMD should be excluded from schools until fever has subsided and all the vesicles have dried and crusted.
3. Supervise children on personal hygiene practices especially on how to wash the hands properly with liquid soap before meals and after going to toilet, cover nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing, and proper disposal of nasal and mouth discharge.



4. Clean toys properly. Washable toys should be cleaned at least daily by immersing them in 1:99 diluted household bleach for 30 minutes before ordinary cleaning. Unwashable toys should be wiped regularly (at least daily) with towels soaking with 1:99 diluted household bleach and wiped dry after rinsing with water. Toys made of strong absorbents such as wool should not be used.
5. Remind staff to wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water after changing diapers for each child, to disinfect diaper-change area by diluted bleach, and to dispose soiled diapers properly.
6. Keep the environment clean and hygienic, and follow the Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Child Care Centres, Kindergartens, and Schools which is available at <http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/Guild-Booklet-eng.pdf>

If you notice an increase in the number of children with symptoms of HFMD or an increase in the number of absentees, please inform the Central Notification Office of CHP as early as possible at Fax: 2477 2770 or Tel: 2477 2772. CHP will give advice on the management of such cases and take appropriate control measures. For more information, please visit the website of CHP at <http://www.chp.gov.hk>

Yours sincerely,



(Dr SK CHUANG)

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