

Dear WCA Families,

This letter is to inform you that there has been a reported case of hand, foot, and mouth disease in the Lower School. Deep cleaning of affected areas has been completed and will continue to be utilized as needed and directed. According to the Virginia Department of Health and local school divisions, there have been many cases reported in the area in recent weeks. As information about hand, foot, and mouth disease is not as commonly known as illnesses like the flu, we wanted to share useful details so everyone is well informed.

- Hand, foot, and mouth disease may include tiny blisters in the mouth and on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. The illness may also include fever, sore throat, or cold symptoms. An infected person may have none, some, or all the symptoms.
- According to the Health Department, the illness is mild for almost all children. Symptoms are the worst in the first few days but are usually completely gone within a week. Early in the illness some children become dehydrated because of fever and mouth pain.
- Parents with infected children who are having severe symptoms should contact their health care provider.
- The virus is found in the fluids from the nose, throat, and skin blisters of an infected person. Another person becomes infected when hands, food, or toys contaminated with the virus are put into the mouth.
- It usually takes 3-6 days after exposure for symptoms to begin. A person is most contagious during the first week of illness.
- Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration if contracting the disease.

How can you help prevent the spread of hand, foot, and mouth disease?

- Wash hands well and often with soap and water, especially after wiping a nose.
- Cover coughs and sneezes.
- Clean, rinse, and sanitize toys regularly after contact with saliva.
- Prevent sharing of food, drinks, and personal items that may touch the mouth.

If a student is running a fever and/or has open blisters, they need to remain at home. Students must be fever free for 24 hours and have no open blisters in order to return to school from hand, foot, and mouth disease. If there is any question on whether they should attend, please contact the school at 757-220-1978.

In Christ,

Mark Kirk