



Fifth Disease (Erythema Infectiosum)

<p>What is it?</p>	<p>Fifth disease is caused by a virus, human parvovirus B19.</p> <p>It is sometimes called “slapped cheek” disease because of the appearance of the rash.</p> <p>Signs and symptoms of fifth disease may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Flu-like symptoms (e.g., runny nose, sore throat, mild body weakness and joint pain, fever) may be present about 7 days before onset of rash ➤ Raised, red rash that first appears on child’s cheeks ➤ The lace-like rash spreads to the rest of the body after 1 – 4 days, first on torso and arms, and then on to the rest of the child’s body ➤ After the rash fades, it may continue to re-appear for 1 – 3 weeks when child is exposed to sunlight or heat (e.g., bathing). <p>At least 50% of adults had fifth disease as a child and won’t get it again. Adults who do develop fifth disease may experience fever and joint pain.</p>
<p>How is it spread?</p>	<p>Through direct and indirect contact with the virus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Touching the hands of someone who is infected with the virus and is in the contagious period ➤ Touching something that has been touched by someone who is infected with the virus and is in the contagious period ➤ Breathing in air contaminated with the virus after an infected person has coughed or sneezed. <p>Fifth disease can be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her unborn baby. The baby can get severe anemia that leads to congestive heart failure.</p> 
<p>Incubation period</p>	<p>Usually 4 – 20 days from contact with infected person</p>
<p>When is the person contagious?</p>	<p>Usually for 7 – 10 days before onset of rash</p> <p>Once the rash appears, the child can no longer pass it on to anyone else.</p>
<p>How to prevent spread of the illness to other children.</p> 	<p>Child may go to school or child care if they are feeling well enough to take part in the activities.</p> <p>Encourage pregnant women working at the school or child care facility who are contacts of an infected child to contact their primary health care provider to determine whether or not they are immune to fifth disease.</p> <p>For more information, refer to Routine Practices.</p> <p><i>Handwashing is the best way to stop the spread of infections.</i></p>