Prevention and Control Measures:
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

Transmission:
• Generally, a person with hand, foot, and mouth disease is most contagious during the first week of illness.
• People can sometimes be contagious shedding the virus for days or weeks (up to 11 weeks) after symptoms go away.
• Some people, especially adults, may not develop any symptoms, but they can still spread the virus to others.
• Person-to-person: Direct contact with saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus from the infected person’s nose and throat or with fluid in blisters, or with stool.
• Surface-to-person: Touching objects and surfaces touched by infected persons.
• Infected persons are most contagious during the first week of the illness, but can still pass the virus for weeks after symptoms have gone away.

Symptoms:
• Fever, rash, sores, poor appetite, a vague feeling of illness, and sore throat.
• Painful sores in the mouth may blister and become ulcers.
• Skin rash, flat or raised red spots, develops over 1 to 2 days.
• Rash usually on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet and may appear on the knees, elbows, bottom, or genital area.
• Dehydration may occur because of painful mouth sores.

Prevention and Control Measures:
• Wash hands with soap and water carefully and frequently, especially after going to the bathroom, after changing diapers, and before preparing foods or beverages.
• Disinfect surfaces and items, including toys. First wash the items with soap and water; then disinfect them with a solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach and 4 cups of water.
• Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with infected people.

For More Information: Visit cdc.gov and type Hand Foot Mouth in the SEARCH box.