

## Prevention and Control Measures: Fifth Disease (erythema infectiosum, parvovirus B19 infections)

### Transmission:

- Parvovirus B19—which causes fifth disease—spreads through respiratory secretions (such as saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus) when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- You are most contagious when it seems like you have "just a cold" and before you get the rash or joint pain and swelling.
- After you get the rash you are not likely to be contagious, so then it is usually safe for you or your child to go back to work or school.
- Once you recover from fifth disease, you develop immunity that generally protects you from parvovirus B19 infection in the future.

### Symptoms:

- Fever
- Runny nose, and
- Headache
- Rash on your face and body
- After several days, you may get a red rash on your face called "slapped cheek" rash. This rash is the most recognized feature of fifth disease. It is more common in children than adults.
- You may also have painful or swollen joints. This is more common in adults, especially women. Some adults with fifth disease may only have painful joints, usually in the hands, feet, or knees, and no other symptoms.



### Prevention and Control Measures:

There is no vaccine or medicine that can prevent parvovirus B19 infection. You can reduce your chance of being infected or infecting others by

- washing your hands often with soap and water
- covering your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- not touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- avoiding close contact with people who are sick
- staying home when you are sick

**For More Information:** Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and type [Fifth Disease](#) in the SEARCH box.



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