

Fifth Disease (Slapped-Cheek Disease)

Symptoms: Low grade fever, or symptoms of a mild cold. Distinct facial rash (slapped-cheek appearance). Lace-like rash on trunk and extremities (rash fades within a week, but may recur for one to three weeks or longer when exposed to sunlight, heat, cold, exercise or stress). Sore throat, respiratory symptoms, abdominal complaints may precede rash.

Method of Transmission: Contact with respiratory secretions

Incubation/Period of Communicability: Variable, usually 4-21 days. The disease remains contagious for 2 weeks to 3 days *before* appearance of the rash.

School Control: Children are no longer contagious and do not need to be excluded from school once the rash occurs. Little can be done to stop the spread of this infection. Children usually feel well or have only a mild illness at this time.

General Concerns: Pregnant women in contact with an infected child between 3 days and 2 weeks before the rash should speak with their doctor. Blood tests to check for immunity or infection are available. Fortunately, most adults have had parvovirus infection during childhood and are no longer at risk of catching the illness.



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