



Erythema Infectiosum

What is Erythema Infectiosum (Human Parovirus B19, Fifth Disease)?

Fifth disease is an illness with a rash caused by a virus. It doesn't make children very sick but you will notice the rash that looks like your child has been slapped on the cheeks.

What are the symptoms?

Erythema Infectiosum begins with a low-grade fever, headache and mild cold symptoms that last approximately seven to ten days. Afterwards, a red rash will appear. The rash starts as bright redness of both cheeks: "the slapped cheek look." It then spreads all over the body. You can't feel it, but it may itch a little. It has a lacy red look that no other rash has. Exercise, warm baths, being outside in the sun, rubbing the skin or getting upset can make the rash look worse or reoccur. The rash may last a few days or two to three weeks.

How is it treated?

Call your child's health care provider anytime your child develops a rash. With Erythema Infectiosum, in most cases, medicine is not necessary.

School or Child care attendance

Since the rash may be prolonged and the illness mild, children should be able to go to school or child care even though the rash is present.

Notice: If you are pregnant, immune suppressed or have sickle cell disease and you have been exposed to fifth disease, alert your health care provider.

For more information contact Guilford County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health at (336) 641-7777 or www.myguilford.com