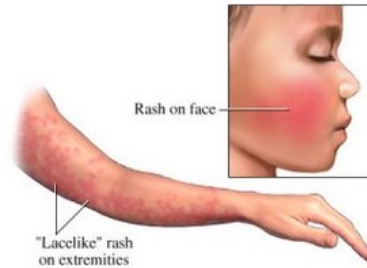


Fifth Disease (Slapped Cheek)

What is it?

Slapped Cheek is a contagious viral illness caused by the human parvovirus B19. It usually starts with a mild fever, sore throat and flu-like symptoms, although some people don't have any symptoms at all. After 3 -7 days from onset of symptoms, a red rash appears on the face that looks like slapped cheeks (hence the name) which can sometimes be accompanied by a lacy or bumpy rash on the body and limbs. Adults can also experience achy joints.



People with Fifth Disease are most infectious before the onset of symptoms and by the time the rash appears they are unlikely to be contagious. It may take 4 – 14 days after getting the virus before any symptoms begin.

Immunity

As it is a mild illness about 50% of adults have had the infection, but didn't know it, have antibodies to it and are immune. A blood test can determine your immunity.

Pregnancy and Slapped Cheek

If you are pregnant, especially in the early stages **please see your doctor** and let them know you could be exposed to Human Parvovirus B19. They will check your immunity and monitor you and your baby for any signs of the illness.

At School

We ask that you are extra vigilant when this illness is present in the community and look out for any of the above symptoms in your child. Please keep your child home from school if they are unwell with an active runny nose, cough or fever as this may be the start of a contagious illness. As with any infectious disease, please inform the school nurse as soon as possible should your child be diagnosed with Fifth Disease.

If you are at all concerned or need more information please see any of the nursing team.

Tanglin Nursing Team

References

Centre for control and Prevention (2005)
Image: Nucleus Medical Art Inc 2008