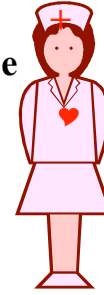


## From the Desk of the School Nurse "Fifth Disease"



This illness is noted for its characteristic rosy cheeks appearance, which is followed by a rash on the arms and legs. It is most often seen during the spring months, but can occur year round. Fortunately, this condition is generally mild, but there are some precautions for both children and adults that deserve careful consideration (please see highlighted information regarding pregnant women).

**Fifth Disease** is a mild viral infection so named because it was the fifth of the childhood rashes (measles, German measles, etc.) to be described by physicians. Outbreaks of this illness among children in elementary school are common. The following information can help you decide if your child may also be experiencing the same illness and needs to see a doctor.

- SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:**
- May be mild: low fever, headache, body aches, nausea, or chills for 2-3 days.
  - About a week later a rash appears beginning with bright redness of the cheeks (slapped cheek appearance). The cheeks are hot but not painful.
  - There may also be scattered red raised spots on the chin, forehead, and behind the ears.
  - Approximately one day later a lace-like rash spreads to upper arms and legs and sometimes the trunk. This lacy rash may disappear and then reappear over a period of several weeks, particularly after exposure to sunlight, extreme heat or cold.
  - Adults may not develop the rash but may experience aching in the joints, particularly at the wrist and knees.
- INCUBATION PERIOD:** From 4-14 days.
- CONTAGIOUS PERIOD:** Before the appearance of the rash during the mild symptoms.
- TRANSMISSION:** Contact with secretions from the nose, mouth, and throat of the infected person. The secretions may be on surfaces or infected droplets in the air.
- SCHOOL ATTENDANCE:** Fever-free children diagnosed with Fifth Disease may return to school even though the rash may still be present. (As noted, by the time the rash shows up they are no longer contagious.)
- TREATMENT:**
- The distinctive rash associated with Fifth Disease is harmless. Fifth Disease generally causes no significant symptoms that require special treatment.
  - You may give a **non-aspirin** pain medication such as Tylenol or Motrin for fever and discomfort according to package directions.
  - Calamine lotion and cool compresses can be soothing in case of itching.

**CALL YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER:**

- If the rash becomes very itchy.
- If your child develops a fever over 101°F.
- If your child experiences severe joint pains.
- If you feel your child is getting worse.
- If you have any other concerns or questions.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Pregnant women in contact with an infected child between 3 and 14 days before the rash appeared should speak with their obstetrician. (Blood tests to check for immunity or infection are available). Fortunately most adults have had this virus during childhood and many were asymptomatic without realizing they even had the disease.

# **ERITEMA INFECCIOSO (QUINTA ENFERMEDAD/FIFTH DISEASE)**

## **Carta de Información para los Padres**

Date:

Maestra: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimados Padres/Guardianes:

Un estudiante de la clase de su hijo(a) ha sido diagnosticado con Eritema Infeccioso o Quinta Enfermedad. La quinta enfermedad es una infección viral ligera, así llamada porque fué la quinta de las enfermedades eruptivas en los niños (sarampión, rubéola, roseola, varicela) descrita por los médicos. No son raras las epidemias de esta enfermedad entre los niños de la escuela elemental. La información siguiente puede ayudarles a decidir si su niño(a) quizás esté sufriendo de la misma enfermedad y necesita consultar a un doctor.

**SIGNOS Y SÍNTOMAS:**

- Pueden ser leves: fiebre baja, dolor de cabeza, dolores en el cuerpo, náusea o escalofríos por 2-3 days.
- Aproximadamente una semana más tarde aparece una erupción que comienza con un fuerte enrojecimiento de las mejillas (parece que le hubieran dado una bofetada). Las mejillas se sienten calientes pero no duelen.
- También puede haber una erupción de manchas rojas elevadas en la quijada, la frente y detrás de las orejas.
- Aproximadamente un día después aparece una erupción en forma de encaje que se propaga a los brazos y piernas y a veces el tronco. Esta erupción parecida al encaje puede desaparecer y aparecer de nuevo durante las semanas siguientes, especialmente después de exposición al sol, calor fuerte o frío.
- En los adultos es posible que no se presente la erupción, pero pueden padecer dolor en las articulaciones, especialmente en las muñecas y las rodillas.

**PERÍODO DE INCUBACIÓN:** De 4 a 14 días.

**PERÍODO DE CONTAGIO:** Durante los síntomas leves, antes de aparecer la erupción.

**MODO DE TRANSMISIÓN:** Por contacto con secreciones de la nariz, boca y garganta de la persona infectada. Las secreciones pueden hallarse en superficies o microgotas infectadas que se encuentran flotando en el aire.

**ASISTENCIA A LA ESCUELA:** Los niños diagnosticados con Eritema Infeccioso o quinta enfermedad, que estén sin fiebre, pueden regresar a la escuela aunque aún tengan la erupción.

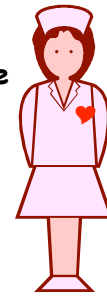
**TRATAMIENTO:**

- La erupción característica, asociada con la quinta enfermedad, es inofensiva. El Eritema Infeccioso no produce mayores síntomas que requieren tratamiento especial.
- Déle a su niño un analgésico *sin aspirina*, para la fiebre y las molestias, de acuerdo a las instrucciones en el envase

**LLAME A SU MÉDICO O ESPECIALISTA DE LA SALUD:**

- Si la erupción produce picazón.
- Si su niño presenta una fiebre de más de 101°F (38.5°C).
- Si su niño presenta dolores fuertes en las articulaciones.
- Si cree que su niño está empeorando.
- Si tiene cualquier otra inquietud o preguntas.

**From the Desk of the School Nurse**  
Fifth Disease Notice



September 3, 2003

Dear Bradfield Parents,

We are seeing **Fifth Disease** illness at school. This illness is noted for its characteristic rosy cheeks appearance, which is followed by a rash on the arms and legs. It is most often seen during the spring months, but can occur year round. Fortunately, this condition is generally mild, but there are some precautions for both children and adults that deserve careful consideration (please see highlighted information regarding pregnant women). Please call me in the clinic at 214-780-3220 if I can answer any questions or help in any way.

Sincerely yours,  
Joy Burger, RN, SNP

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This fact sheet is adapted from school nurse list-serve. 1/2009 CF