

Please distribute to all providers and relevant medical staff in your office.

## Health Advisory: Atypical Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease

DATE: August 24, 2012  
TO: Medical Providers  
FROM: Karen Furst, MD, MPH, Health Officer

### Current Situation

Atypical hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) caused by coxsackievirus A6 (CVA6) has been detected in multiple counties in California and in the United States in recent months. No deaths or serious long-term sequelae have been reported as a result of these infections. There have not been any outbreaks of atypical HFMD due to CVA6 identified in San Joaquin County so far.

### Background

HFMD is a common viral illness caused by various enteroviruses, usually affecting children under the age of five years. The most common causes of the typical HFMD in the United States is coxsackievirus A-16 and enterovirus 71. While the atypical form, coxsackievirus A-6, is not a new virus, it has not widely circulated in the United States in recent years.

While almost three quarters of the atypical HFMD cases have been reported in daycare or preschool settings, about a quarter of those reported have been adults.

### Signs and symptoms of atypical HFMD

- More severe rash and higher fever than seen in typical HFMD.
- Skin rash including widespread papules and/or large blisters and/or hemorrhagic areas.
- Rash involving not just the hands, feet, and mouth, but also limbs, buttocks, and trunk, often in areas of prior skin damage or irritation (prior sunburn, atopic dermatitis, etc.).
- Skin desquamation and nail shedding may follow the rash.
- Cases of atypical HFMD can be mistaken for impetigo, eczema herpeticum, and Kawasaki disease.

### Modes of transmission and infection control

Enteroviruses are spread from person to person via contact with saliva, sputum, blister fluid, and stool from an infected individual. Persons can also become infected after touching objects and surfaces contaminated by infected individuals.

Covering one's mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and good hand washing, especially after sneezing, coughing, changing diapers and using the toilet, can help prevent spread. Dirty surfaces and soiled items should be washed with soap and water and disinfected with a chlorine bleach solution.

### Actions requested of clinicians

- Educate patients and their families about atypical HFMD.
- Exclude sick children from school or daycare until they have been afebrile for at least 24 hours without the use of antipyretics and they have been free of diarrhea and/or vomiting for at least 24 hours. If an atypical rash with extensive blistering is present, the child may be excluded until blisters are healed or scabbed and no longer draining or oozing.
- **Please notify San Joaquin County Public Health Services Communicable Disease Program of suspected outbreaks and patients who are seriously ill, hospitalized or have neurological symptoms at:**
  - **Phone: 209-468-3822**
  - **Fax: 209-468-8222**

The Communicable Disease Program will coordinate testing for these patients at the Public Health Laboratory.