Wednesday, April 19, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians of 1D,

Another student from your student’s class has been diagnosed with Fifth Disease. Fifth Disease is a common childhood viral infection caused by a human virus called Parvovirus B19. Most children recover from it quickly and without complications. It is commonly called “Slapped Cheek Syndrome” because of the distinctive red rash that appears on the face.

Fifth Disease begins with a low-grade fever, headache and mild cold-like symptoms. These symptoms pass and the illness seems to be gone until a rash appears a few days later. The bright red rash usually appears on the face first and then extends down to the trunk, arms, and legs.

A child with this infection is most contagious before the rash appears, usually between the infection and the onset of symptoms or during the time the child has mild respiratory symptoms. It is not contagious once the rash appears. The incubation period (time between infection and the onset of symptoms) ranges from 4-28 days with the average being 16-17 days. The rash lasts from 1-3 weeks. Once someone has been infected with Parvovirus B19, they develop immunity to it and should not become infected again.

Fifth Disease is caused by a virus and therefore cannot be treated with antibiotics. Generally, children with Fifth Disease feel well and need little treatment other than rest. If you suspect that your child may have Fifth Disease, please consult your family doctor.

If you are pregnant or know of someone who might have been exposed to the Parvovirus B19, it is important to see your family doctor as some fetuses can have complications related to this virus.

We are monitoring this situation closely, and being proactive with extra disinfecting and cleaning in the school to reduce all risk of further cases. If you have further health-related concerns regarding your child’s class, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,

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