

HAND FOOT MOUTH DISEASE AND HOMOEOPATHY

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ABSTRACT

Hand Foot Mouth Disease is a viral infection that affects children upto age of 5 years. The infection is very contagious and its very important to take necessary measures to break the chain. The infection goes on its own but measures should be taken to avoid unnecessary complications, give relief to the child and reduce the load. Homeopathic medicines are quite effective in viral infections.

KEYWORDS : Hand Foot Mouth Disease, Children, Viral, Rashes, Homoeopathy

INTRODUCTION:

Hand Foot Mouth Disease (HFMD) is common viral illness that affects primarily the children below 5 years of age. It is caused by viruses from the *Enterovirus* genus, most commonly the coxsackievirus and is a highly contagious infection. Symptoms include sores in the mouth and a rash on the hands and feet, that is why named Hand Foot Mouth Disease.

Risk Factors:

These viruses can spread from infected person to healthy through direct contact with unwashed hands or surfaces contaminated with feces. It can also be transmitted through contact with infected person's saliva, stool, or respiratory secretions.

Clinical Features:

Incubation period is 3 to 6 days, that means it takes 3-6 days for symptoms to appear post getting infected. Common symptoms are as follows:

- fever
- decreased appetite
- sore throat
- headache
- Irritability
- Fussiness in infants and toddlers.
- malaise (feeling unwell)
- painful red blisters in your mouth
- drooling
- A rash on the palms, soles and sometimes the buttocks. The rash is not itchy, but sometimes it has blisters. Depending on skin tone, the rash may appear red, white, gray, or only show as tiny bumps.
- Painful, blister-like lesions on the tongue, gums and inside of the cheeks.

**Diagnosis:**

Diagnosis is clinical.

Differential Diagnosis:

1. Herpangina: Ulcers on the roof of mouth, headache, neck pain along with symptoms of HFMD

2. Herpetic Gingivostomatitis: Manifestation of Herpes Simplex Virus Type-1 and is characterized by high grade fever and painful oral lesions.
3. Aphthous Ulcers/ Canker Sores: A small shallow sore inside the mouth or at the base of gums. Does Not occur on lips and isn't contagious.

Prevention:

There is no vaccination available against HFMD. A person can lower the risk of being infected by:

- Washing hands often with soap and water, especially after changing diapers and using the toilet.
- Disinfecting dirty surfaces and soiled items, including toys. First wash the items with soap and water, then disinfect them with a bleach solution (made by following the directions on the bleach container).
- Avoiding close contact such as kissing, hugging, or sharing eating utensils or cups with people who have HFMD.

Complications:

- Dehydration
- Fingernail and toenail loss
- Viral Meningitis
- Viral Encephalitis

Management:

- Analgesics
- Soft diet

Homoeopathic Medicines:

Homeopathic prescription is always selected after forming the totality and finding the most similar remedy for that particular patient for his/her indicated symptoms. Some of the homoeopathic medicines that are helpful are *Aconitum napellus*, *Arsenicum album*, *Bryonia alba*, *Calcarea carbonica*, *Causticum*, *Iodium*, *Kalium carbonicum*, *Kalium iodatum*, *Lachesis mutus*, *Lycopodium clavatum*, *Mercurius solubilis*, *Nitricum acidum*, *Petroleum*, *Phosphorus*, *Sepia*, *Silicea*, *Sulphur*.

DISCUSSION:

HFMD illness is not usually serious but is very contagious. Timely intervention can help the child by managing the severity of symptoms and preventing the child from being contagious. Prevention and breaking the chain is must. Homeopathic medicines help the child to get symptomatic relief during the course of disease and also helps avoiding unnecessary complications and side effects.

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