

NOTIFICATION OF FIFTH DISEASE
(A mild, contagious viral infection)*

Incubation period: (the time between exposure to the disease and the appearance of symptoms). Variable; 4-20 days to development of a rash.

Contagious period: (when the disease can be transmitted to another person) Before the onset of the rash and probably not infectious after the onset of the rash.

Signs and symptoms: May consist of mild fever, fatigue and headache. 7 – 10 days later a bright red rash appears on the face (a “slapped cheek” appearance) and a lace-like rash may develop on the arms, legs, trunk and thighs. The rash may come and go over a period of 1-3 weeks. Heat and sunlight may aggravate the rash.

Treatment: For most children only supportive care for symptoms is needed. Make sure child is not too hot, is kept out of the sunlight and is well hydrated.

How this disease is spread: This disease is spread by contact with the infected person’s respiratory secretions by coughing, sneezing and contaminated hands.

Control of cases: Transmission may be limited by practicing good hand washing technique and proper disposal of facial tissues containing respiratory secretions. Children should also avoid sharing eating utensils. When washing hands, use soap, rubbing hands together for 15 seconds and rinse in running water.

*Persons at risk include pregnant women, people with compromised immune systems and those with certain forms of anemia. If exposed contact your doctor for further information.