

Point View School - 16 November 2011

We have had a few cases of slap cheek in the school recently. Below is an excerpt from the Ministry of Health web site.

Slap Cheek (Parvovirus)

What is slap cheek?

This viral illness gets its name from the characteristic 'slap like' rash that appears on children's faces. It is a relatively mild disease that begins with a rash on the face which spreads to the body and then fades. The virus is spread by sneezing, coughing, kissing or close contact. **Children are infectious for the 5 - 6 days before the rash appears.**

Incubation time (the period from first being exposed to the illness until symptoms developing) is around 5 – 20 days. **Once the rash appears, the child is no longer infectious.** Once your child has recovered from slap cheek they should have lifelong immunity to the illness.

What are the signs and symptoms of slap cheek or parvovirus?

- The rash can be preceded by a fever, sore throat and cold symptoms
 - A red rash on the face that may appear on one or both cheeks- it actually looks like the cheek has been slapped
 - The rash on the body is firstly red and blotchy and then becomes faded and lace-like
 - The child is normally well, apart from the rash, but may have stomach upsets, headache and fatigue.
- Slap cheek can also affect adults where it may present as joint pains (especially hands, wrists, ankles, knees) and swelling that may last from days to weeks. There will often be no rash in adults.

What is the treatment for parvovirus?

Contact your doctor if your child's temperature is very high, or you are in the first half of a pregnancy or you are not sure if the rash is slap cheek. There isn't any treatment as such - you just need to keep your child comfortable.

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