



# Fifth Disease

## Parvovirus B19

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### What is Fifth disease?

Fifth disease is a mild rash illness caused by Parvovirus B19. It is also called erythema infectiosum. It is more common in children than adults. It got its name because it was fifth in a list of historical classifications of common skin rashes in children.

### How is Fifth disease spread?

Fifth disease spreads through respiratory secretions (saliva, sputum, nasal secretions) when an infected person coughs or sneezes. An infected person is most contagious before the rash appears. After the rash appears, you are not as contagious. Fifth disease can also be spread through blood or blood products. A pregnant woman, who is infected, can pass the disease on to her baby.

### What are the symptoms of Fifth disease?

The first signs of fifth disease are usually mild and “cold-like”- fever, runny nose, and headache. Then, a rash appears on your face and body. It is often referred to as a “slapped cheek” rash. This rash is the most recognized symptom of fifth disease. The rash usually goes away in 7-10 days. People with fifth disease can also develop painful, swollen joints. This symptom is more common in adults than children.

### How is Fifth disease prevented?

Good hand hygiene is the easiest way to prevent fifth disease. Wash your hands often with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

### School Exclusion Policy:

Children do not need to be excluded from school, unless they have a fever of 100 degrees or more. Children must be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication, before returning to school.

### Resources:

Center for Disease Control & Prevention- <http://www.cdc.gov/parvovirusB19/about-parvovirus.html>