

# Slapped Cheek

Single  
Point  
Lesson

Slapped cheek syndrome - also called fifth disease or parvovirus B19. It is a viral infection that's most common in children, although it can affect people of any age.

## **Infectivity and Incubation Period.**

For most children with slapped cheek syndrome it is normally a short mild illness.

The infection is most contagious during the initial period before the rash appears. The infectious period is a few days before the rash appears. Children are no longer contagious once the rash appears. The incubation period is 1 to 20 days.

### **You can become infected by:**

inhaling droplets that are sneezed or coughed out by someone with the infection or touching a contaminated surface or object and then touching your mouth or nose



## **Symptoms of Slapped cheek**

Children may have a headache, sore throat, runny nose or mild temperature (fever) that last for a few days and occur around 7-10 days before the rash appears. After a few days, a distinctive bright red rash on both cheeks. By the time this rash develops, the condition is no longer contagious.

After another few days, a light pink rash may also appear on the chest, stomach, arms and thighs. This often has a raised, lace-like appearance and may be itchy.

## **Slapped cheek and Pregnant staff.**

Pregnant staff who have had contact with children with slapped cheek should consult with their GP or midwife.

Infection in pregnancy, particularly early pregnancy, carries a risk of causing miscarriage, stillbirth or other complications.

## **Infection Control advice**

Unless the child is feeling unwell, there's no need to stay away from school once the rash has developed, as the infection is no longer contagious by this point.

Children should drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

Wash your hands regularly – this is particularly important and will stop the infection spreading to others.

Encourage and supervise small children with handwashing

Toys should be on a regularly cleaned, and all areas should be cleaned regularly according to a cleaning schedule.

Parents should be advised to treat fever, and reduce symptoms of itch with antihistamines and emollients.

**Please contact the Infection control team for additional advice/support on 01744 457314**