

FIFTH DISEASE

TO: Parents/Guardian

FROM: NDES Nurse

Your child may have been exposed to “**Fifth Disease**” or also known as “**Slapface**”. The medical term for this is Erythema Infectiosum, it is caused by the human parvovirus B19. It was given the name Fifth Disease because it is the fifth of the five viral rash diseases of childhood, (the other four being measles, rubella, roseola and chicken pox). A child with the disease may have a mild cold or flu-like symptoms **with or without a low grade fever** followed a few days later by a bright, red rash on the cheeks, spreading to the upper body and out to the extremities. The rash on the extremities and trunk will have a “fine, red, lacy appearance”. It usually fades within a week, but may reappear for up to three or four weeks following onset of the illness. Environmental changes such as a warm bath, sunlight, rubbing the skin or exposure to cold temperatures may cause the rash to reappear also. There also may be some itchiness. There is no treatment for this virus. On a rare occasion, some children with Fifth Disease may develop joint pain and swelling.

A child infected with the disease is **contagious** during the early part of the illness, **BEFORE** the rash appears. The method of transmission is by direct or indirect contact of respiratory secretions of an infected person. By the time the child has the characteristic “slapped cheek” rash, he or she is probably no longer contagious and may return to school if they are feeling well. **Special precautions:** A child with a **rash and a high temperature** should be seen by a physician to confirm a diagnosis. **Pregnant women** who think they may have been exposed should notify their physician. Most adults are immune.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the school clinic at (440)-279-1127 ext. 1130