

Slapped Cheek Syndrome

Sometimes called fifth disease or erythema infectiosum.

It most commonly occurs in children aged from 3 to 15 years, but anyone can be affected and it is an infection caused by the parvovirus B19 virus.

Slapped Cheek Syndrome is transmitted through droplets sneezed or coughed out by infected children.

Symptoms:

Children may get a runny nose or cold like symptoms, fever, headache, nausea and most commonly a rash.



The rash will typically look like a red scald to one or both cheeks and appear like the child has been slapped and may become blotchy. The rash can spread to the body, arms and the legs.

If the rash starts to fade certain stimuli for example a bath or exercise can reactivate the rash. It may take 1 to 3 weeks for the rash to completely disappear.

The incubation period is usually before the rash appears. This period can last 4-28 days, once the rash appears you are no longer infectious.

Treatment

As the fifth disease is a virus it cannot be treated with anti-biotics. Over the counter anti-pyretics can be used for a temperature and anti-histamines if the rash becomes itchy.

If a pregnant woman has been exposed to slapped cheek syndrome, she needs to go to her doctor straight away especially if they are in their first or second trimester.