

# CDRS

Communicable Disease Reporting System

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FACT SHEET **FIFTH DISEASE** (ERYTHEMA INFECTIOSUM)

Fifth Disease is a mild rash illness that occurs most commonly in children. It is so called because at the turn of the century it was considered the fifth disease of childhood (after rubella, measles, scarlet fever and another rash illness.) Fifth Disease is caused by human parvovirus B19.

### Symptoms

- Sometimes a low-grade fever and general fatigue 1 to 2 weeks after exposure
- A red rash on the cheeks giving a “slapped face” appearance
- 25% or more of infections may be asymptomatic
- Frequently associated with a lace-like rash on the trunk and extremities that fades but may recur for 1-3 weeks or longer on exposure to sunlight or heat
- Fifth Disease is usually a mild illness that resolves on its own among children and adults who are otherwise healthy.

### Transmission

- The virus is spread by exposure to airborne droplets from the nose and throat of infected people
- It can be spread one week before appearance of the rash and usually not after the rash appears
- By the time the rash appears, the individual is probably no longer contagious and may return to school or child care.
- From mother to fetus
- Animal “parvovirus” does not affect humans, and humans cannot transmit human parvovirus B19 to animals

### Incubation Period

- 4 to 20 days after contact with a case

### Treatment & Prevention

- There is no specific treatment
- Pregnant women and those immunocompromised should avoid exposure to infectious people during outbreaks
- Frequent, thorough hand washing
- Persons infected with the virus, regardless of symptoms, develop lasting immunity that protects them from future infection

**All information is general in nature and is not intended to be used as a substitute for appropriate professional advice.**

Franklin County



Board of Health

Report Disease With Ease - 24 hours a day

[www.cdrsinfo.com](http://www.cdrsinfo.com)

Columbus and Franklin County Communicable Disease Reporting System

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