Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease

What is Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease?
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease is a common viral infection that predominantly affects toddlers and school age children. The disease occurs most often in the summer and fall months (May through October). It causes a blister-like rash that, as the name implies, involves the hands, feet and mouth. Occasionally blisters or red spots can also occur on the buttocks, genitals and extremities. Your child may also have fever, and the blisters in the mouth are painful so he/she may not want to eat or drink. The fever usually lasts up to 5 days. The mouth ulcers may last about 7 days, but the blisters on the hands and feet may last 7-10 days.

Treatment
Since this is a viral infection, it will clear up by itself and antibiotics are of no use in treatment. The only treatment involves relieving pain so your child is more comfortable and more willing to eat and drink.

To Keep Your Child Comfortable and Prevent Dehydration:
- Give Acetaminophen (Tylenol, Tempra, etc.) or Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, etc.) for pain or fever. Your dose is: Acetaminophen ___________ every 4 hours
  Ibuprofen ___________ every 6 hours
- Encourage cold or cool liquids. These may be soothing to the mouth and help numb the pain. Avoid citrus and carbonated drinks (orange, grapefruit juices, lemonade, soda, etc.). Soft foods such as applesauce, yogurt, pudding, or mashed potatoes may be less irritating to the mouth.
- Avoid salty or spicy foods
- If your doctor has given you a mouthwash or other medication, use as directed

Prevention
This illness is quite contagious. To prevent spread of this infection:
- Wash your hands and your child’s hands frequently, especially after changing diapers, and before eating
- Do not share your child’s eating utensils or drinking cups while sick, wash after each use
- Wash any toys your child places in his/her mouth before and after your child plays with them

Call Your Doctor or Return to the Emergency Department If:
- Your child is refusing to drink or cannot swallow
- Your child appears dehydrated
  o No urine in the last 6-8 hours
  o No tears when crying
  o Lips are dry or cracked
- You think your child looks worse
- Your child is not getting any better after 1 week or you have any other questions or concerns