



St Benedict's Primary School

P.O. Box 59, Tallara Parkway

NARRABUNDAH, ACT, 2904

Ph: 02 6295 8027

Email: Office.StBenedicts@cg.catholic.edu.au

20th June 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian

SLAPPED CHEEK DISEASE IN YOUR CHILD'S CLASS

You are receiving this circular because a parent of your child's class has contacted the school and informed us that their child has been diagnosed with Slapped Cheek Disease.

Please take some time and read the information below that has been taken from the government health direct website <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/fifth-disease>.

Rachel Smith

Principal



Fifth disease (Slapped cheekdisease)

Fifth disease also known as 'slapped cheek disease' is a fairly mild viral illness. It gets its name from its most obvious symptom - a red rash that makes children's cheeks look like they've been slapped.

Causes

Fifth disease or slapped cheek disease is a viral infection caused by parvovirus B19. Outbreaks generally happen in early spring. This virus is spread through personal contact or through coughing and sneezing. It most commonly affects primary school aged children.

Symptoms

The incubation period for slapped cheek disease is about two weeks - The infectious period is a few days before the rash appears (children are no longer contagious when the rash appears).

- It begins with a fever, headache and runny nose.
- A bright red rash, like the mark left by a slap, appears on the cheeks.
- Over the next two to four days a lacy rash spreads to the trunk and limbs.
- Children with blood disorders such as spherocytosis or sickle cell disease may become more anaemic. They should seek medical care.

What to do

- Make sure your child rests and drinks plenty of fluids.
- Give them paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve the discomfort and fever.
- Pregnant women or women planning to become pregnant should see their doctor or midwife as soon as possible if they come into contact with the infection or develop a rash.

Prevention

Parvovirus is most contagious during the incubation period, around two weeks before the onset of the rash or other symptoms. Your child isn't usually contagious once the rash has appeared.

No vaccine is currently available for slapped cheek disease. Good hygiene and careful handwashing in childcare facilities and schools helps prevent spread of the disease, but there's nothing else you can do to stop it spreading. There's no need to keep your child home from childcare or school.

When to see the doctor

The virus can affect an unborn child. If you're pregnant and you've become infected, or you've come into contact with someone with the virus, you should see your doctor immediately for blood tests and monitoring of your pregnancy.