



17400 Route 22, Cherry Plain, NY 12040 | Phone: 518-658-1500

P.O. Box 259 Berlin NY 12022

A. Joseph Dhara, Superintendent of Schools

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Dear BCSD Families:

Coxsackie Virus (Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease) has been reported at both BES and BMHS. While it is usually not serious, it is highly contagious. Please review the information below so that you can help prevent your child from contracting the virus and keep it from spreading to others.

What is it?

Hand, foot, and mouth disease is a viral infection caused by a strain of Coxsackie Virus. It causes a blister-like rash normally found on the hands, feet, and mouth. It may also be found on other areas of the body.

How is it spread?

The virus is spread by direct contact with nose and throat germs, blisters, and feces of infected people.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms usually develop within 3-5 days after exposure and include:

- fever
- poor appetite
- runny nose
- sore throat
- blister-like rash on the hands, feet, and in the mouth that usually develops one to two days after the initial symptoms.

What is the treatment?

There is no specific treatment. Treatment is aimed at fever control and staying hydrated.

How can we prevent it?

Wash hands thoroughly and frequently. Teach your children how important hand washing is. They should wash their hands when dirty before they eat and after using the bathroom.

When should I keep my child home?

Please do not send your child to school if they have a fever and/or the rash described above. A child must be fever free for 24 hours (without having taken fever-reducing medication) and the rash must be gone before returning to school.

The health and safety of our students is our top priority. Please contact your physician or school nurse if you suspect your child may be ill.

Berlin Elementary School:

Jean Hammond, RN-School Nurse
Phone – (518) 658-1500 ext. 3008
Email – jhammond@berlincentral.org

Berlin Middle High School:

Michele Corsey, RN-School Nurse
Phone – (518)-658-1500 ext. 1061
Email – mcorsey@berlincentral.org

Sincerely,

Joseph Dhara
Superintendent of Schools
Berlin Central School District