

Fifth Disease

Fifth disease is a mild rash illness that occurs most commonly in children. The child typically has a "slapped cheek" rash on the face and a lacy red rash on the trunk and limbs. Occasionally, the rash may itch. The rash may take a week or more to disappear. Characteristically, the rash returns for a half-day or so when the child becomes overheated. This reoccurrence may happen several times. An infected child may have low-grade fever, malaise, or a "cold" a few days before the rash breaks out.

This disease is of little significance since the child is not ill during the acute phase nor are complications experienced. The only importance it has is in the differential diagnosis of other childhood rashes such as: scarlet fever, rubella or measles, and the possible interference in the growth and development of the embryo or fetus in pregnant women.

If your child has the above symptoms, please contact your child's physician for a positive diagnosis. If your child is well (no fever, cough, etc.), he/she may be re-admitted to school even if there is still some evidence of a rash, and if he/she has a note from the physician stating that the diagnosis is "Fifth Disease".

For further information, please visit: www.cdc.gov