Fifth Disease (Parvovirus B19) Illness Notification Recommendations

The verbiage below can be used to notify parents of *one or more cases of Fifth disease in a classroom*. Include this fact sheet with the notification: milivcounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/Fifth-Disease.pdf.

School Name: (Include school name here)
Classroom: (Include classroom name here)

Date: (Include date here)

Dear Parent and/or Guardian:

At least one student in your child's classroom has been diagnosed with fifth disease, also known as parvovirus B19.

About Fifth Disease:
Fifth disease is a mild rash disease that is more common in children than adults. It is a viral infection caused by the human parvovirus, B19. Most cases appear in winter and spring.

Fifth disease spreads through airborne droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may also spread through blood. Pregnant people with parvovirus can spread the virus to their baby. A person is most contagious during the first few days of symptoms. They are unlikely to be contagious after they get later symptoms such as rash and joint pain. It is usually safe to go back to work or school after the rash appears.

Early symptoms of fifth disease can include fever, runny nose, and headache. These are often followed by joint pain and a rash with a “slapped cheek” appearance. Most individuals who get fifth disease have mild symptoms and recover. It can cause serious health complications in people with sickle cell anemia, impaired immune systems, and pregnancy.

Next Steps for Your Family:
Watch your child for symptoms of fifth disease for the next 14 days. Contact your healthcare provider if your child has any symptoms.

Pregnant women should consult with their healthcare provider. If you get a parvovirus B19 infection during pregnancy, the virus could spread to the baby. Usually there are no serious complications for a pregnant woman or her baby because of exposure to fifth disease. Most pregnant women who do become ill with fifth disease have only a mild illness and there are no adverse effects on the baby. Occasionally severe anemia can occur in the unborn baby, which may result in a miscarriage. Miscarriage occurs in less than 5% of all pregnant women infected with fifth disease and is most common during the first half of pregnancy.

Tips to Reduce the Spread of Fifth Disease:

- Children should stay home if they have a fever, runny nose, headache, or cold-like symptoms.
- Remind your child to cover their mouths when they sneeze or cough.
- Encourage good hand hygiene, washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Clean surfaces with soap and water. Then use a store-bought disinfectant or homemade solution, being sure to leave disinfectant on the surface for one minute before wiping dry. To make a homemade disinfectant solution: combine 1 gallon of water with 1/3 cup household bleach. Visit the When and How to Clean/Disinfect Your Home webpage to learn more.
- Wash and dry clothing, linens, towels, and soft toys at the highest temperature recommended for the item.

If you have any questions, contact your healthcare provider or Livingston County Health Department at 517-546-6882.