

HERPES (COLD SORES) PARENT FACT SHEET

PARENT/GUARDIAN

Your child may have been exposed to: Herpes (Cold Sores)

Herpes simplex is a viral infection that may cause sores in the mouth or on the lips and face. The sores are commonly called cold sores.

If you think your child has cold sores:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- Keep your child home from childcare if they have a first infection and are drooling.
- Your child can return when the sores in the mouth have healed.
- Your child does not need to stay home if they have a recurring infection.
- School aged children do not need to stay home.

Symptoms

The first time a child is infected there may be blister-like sores inside the mouth and on the gums. Your child may have a fever and be fussy. The cold sores and fever blisters may occur many times in a person's life (recurrent infection).

If your child is infected for the first time, it may take 2 to 14 days for symptoms to start.

Spread

- By having direct contact with saliva, commonly by kissing.
- By touching the fluid from the blisters or sores.

Contagious period

First infection: up to 2 weeks, sometimes longer.

Recurring infection: usually 3 to 5 days.

Call your health care provider

- If anyone in your home has symptoms of oral herpes infection.

Prevention

- Remind children not to touch the sores.
- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the mouth or the sores. Your child may need help with hand washing.
- Clean and disinfect objects that come in contact with the sores or secretions from the mouth. Use a product that kills germs.
- Do not kiss a person with sores on or near the mouth.

- Wear disposable medical gloves when touching the sores and use a cotton-tipped swab to apply medication. Dispose of gloves after use.

For more information, please contact your local health department.

[Southern Nevada Health District](#) (Clark County) 775-759-1300 (24 hours)

[Northern Nevada Public Health](#) (Washoe County) 775-328-2447 (24 hours)

[Carson City Health & Human Services](#) (Carson City, Douglas, Lyon Counties) 775-887-2190 (24 hours)

[Division of Public and Behavioral Health](#) (All other Counties) 775-400-0333 (24 hours)

Email: dpbhepi@health.nv.gov