

Roseola

FACTSHEET

Sixth Disease/ Exanthem Subitum

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What is Roseola?

Roseola is an acute, febrile rash illness caused by a virus.

Who gets Fifth Disease?

Roseola occurs in children usually under four years of age. It is most common in children under the age of two.

What are the symptoms of Roseola?

The symptoms of roseola include a high fever that lasts for three to five days. A runny nose, irritability, eyelid swelling, and tiredness may also be present. When the fever disappears, a rash appears, mainly on the face and body.

How is Roseola spread?

Roseola is spread from person to person but the exact way is not known. It appears that saliva may be an important way for the spread of the virus.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually occur ten days after being infected with the virus, but can be as short as five and as long as fifteen.

Is a person with Roseola contagious?

Yes, a person with roseola is contagious but the time that they are contagious is unknown.

How is Roseola treated?

There is no specific treatment for roseola. Symptoms such as fever can be treated with over the counter

medications. Frequent hand washing may limit transmission (spread). Women who are pregnant and have been exposed to this illness should discuss the exposure with their doctor.

Should a child with Roseola be excluded from Child-care?

Yes, a child with fever and rash should be excluded from child-care until seen by a health-care provider. The child may return to child-care once the fever has gone, even if the rash is present.

How can Roseola be prevented?

There is no vaccine or medicine that prevents roseola. Frequent and thorough hand washing is recommended as a practical and effective method of preventing most infections

Want more information?

Additional information about Roseola can be provided by your health-care provider. The DC Department of Health promotes the health and safety of the District residents. For additional information, please call 202-442-5842.

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