

Facts about Cold Sores (Herpes Simplex)

How Are Cold Sores Spread?

There are two types of the herpes simplex virus.

Herpes Simplex Type 1 usually causes an infection in or around the mouth, often called “cold sores” or “fever blisters”. Cold sores are most often spread by direct contact with a sore.

Herpes Simplex Type 2 usually causes an infection in, on or around the sex organs. It is spread by sexual contact.

Touching the sores or saliva from the mouth of someone with herpes simplex can spread the virus. Kissing can also spread the virus. People with herpes simplex can spread the virus even if they have no visible sores or symptoms.

Once people are infected with a herpes virus, they have it for life. Some people will get cold sores again and again, though the sores may be less severe as a person gets older.

The first time children are infected with herpes simplex, they may not feel ill. Some children do get very sick and may have a high fever, swollen glands and painful sores in or around the mouth. They can be sick for a week or more. The sores may hurt so much that the child can't eat or drink and will need medical care.



What to Do at the Centre or School

- Wash and sanitize mouthed toys, bottle nipples, sippy cups, spoons, etc.
- Do not share food, drinks or eating utensils among children and staff.
- Avoid kissing or nuzzling a child when a cold sore is present.



What to Do at Home

- Talk to your doctor about how to make your child comfortable.
- Teach children (and adults) not to touch the sores and to wash their hands frequently.
- Teach children not to suck their thumbs; they can spread the disease to their hands.
- Avoid putting your fingers in the child's mouth, when a cold sore is present.
- Avoid kissing or nuzzling a child when a cold sore is present.
- Wash and sanitize mouthed toys, bottle nipples, spoons, etc.
- Do not share food, drinks or eating utensils.
- Keep a child with cold sores away from newborn babies.



Children with a first attack of herpes simplex that causes drooling from the mouth should not go to the child care centre or school until the sore is crusted over.