

**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.

For more information, call Dakota County Public Health Department at 952-891-7500.

**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 or 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.

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