

When play schools are germ spots

By Dr Arvind Taneja

Having been a paediatrician for the past 40 years, I look after children from birth to adolescence, and seeing children happy and healthy is my mission.

... Many distressed parents keep complaining that their 2-to-3-year-olds are falling sick (with colds, stomach infections etc.) every two to three weeks. My first question to them is, "When did your child join play school?" With that answered, my next query is, "When did these illnesses become frequent?" Invariably, the dates coincide....

And the reason is!

... germs love a crowd because then they can easily spread from one to the other to another till the last child in the class falls prey to them. It has been well documented in scientific literature that diseases like influenza, hepatitis, diarrhoea, skin infections and meningitis are best spread in play schools where toddlers are in close contact with each other.

Another germ hotspot in certain play schools: the pet zone. Animals like rabbits, guinea pigs, and birds like pigeons and parrots are carriers of some dangerous bugs. And in the absence of proper precautions, kids may acquire certain severe infections like salmonellosis.

Of course there is the sand pit in the playground and the blackboard chalk where the child is exposed to dust and in due course gets asthma, allergic rhinitis or other allergies.



Source: Read more at: http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/when-play-schools-are-germ-spots/1/108516.html

Viral infection spreading among kids

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... City paediatricians are seeing an increased number of children suffering from hand-foot-mouth disease, an illness caused by a virus called enterovirus that results in painful sores in/on the mouth, hands and feet followed by viral fever and throat infection...

The infection is normally seen after summer, when playschools and day care centres re-open. Children are easily infected as they tend to touch everything and put their hands in their mouth. In a closed environment, the illness spreads quickly. Adults can also catch the infection from children...

"The last fortnight has been crazy and there's definitely an outbreak. This viral is highly contagious and spreads fast among children...

Dr Dinesh Banur, paediatrician at Columbia Asia, Hebbal, who is attending to hand-foot-mouth infected children at the hospital. We are getting children of all ages. Only in rare situations does the condition get complicated. Hygiene is very important to contain the spread, but it is difficult to maintain that degree of hygiene in school," says Dr Banur.

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