



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH,
WELLNESS AND THE
ENVIRONMENT**

**Ministerial Building, Kingstown,
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

**PRESS STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, 10th February, 2025

Contact: Permanent Secretary
Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE FLU SEASON IN SVG

The Surveillance Committee of the MOHWE has noted the typical increase in reports of viral respiratory infections expected in the months of November to February, the “flu season”, in SVG.

The surveillance committee reported the following of the Epidemiology Week 5: January 26 - February 1, 2025:

1. Cases of gastroenteritis, Fever & Respiratory infections in persons older than 5 years and Undifferentiated Fever were reported over the threshold of what is normal.
2. There were 12 cases of Influenza A (H1N1), including 1 person who was hospitalized.
3. There was one (1) case each of chickenpox, toxoplasmosis, scabies, and Hepatitis A.
4. There were seventy seven (77) cases of HFMD.

For the Year to date (YTD) there were 66 cases of influenza A (21.2% hospitalized), two imported case of H3N2 (bird flu) and 156 cases of Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease.

The MOHWE notes the public’s concerns about the reports of cases of Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) in our preschools and kindergartens, and would like to reassure the public that we have been working closely with the Ministry of Education and individual schools to ensure that our children remain safe and healthy.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) is a common viral illness among infants and children under the age of five years, but can also occur in older children and adults. Usually, HFMD gets better on its own within 7 to 10 days. It is important to note that Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease is NOT the same as foot and mouth disease that affects farm animals.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) signs and symptoms are as follows:

1. Fever
2. Sore throat
3. Reduced appetite
4. Feeling/looking unwell
5. One or two days after the fever starts, painful sores may develop in the mouth. They usually begin as small red spots, often in the back of the mouth, that blister and can become painful, making it difficult for the child to swallow.
6. A skin rash on the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, small red spots, sometimes with blisters. It may also appear on the knees, elbows, buttocks or genital area.



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH,
WELLNESS AND THE
ENVIRONMENT**

**Ministerial Building, Kingstown,
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

The disease can be spread from person to person through:

1. Close personal contact, such as hugging an infected person;
2. Contact with faeces when changing diapers of an infected person and hands are not thoroughly washed after;
3. Touching contaminated surfaces like door knobs, toys, tables etc. then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth before washing your hands.

Although fatalities and hospitalization of HFMD are low the Ministry will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Do you need an information session, materials or have questions? Send us an email or visit one of the links provided below for more information.

1. Health promotion unit - hpu@gov.vc
2. Community nursing department - cnssvg@yahoo.com
3. Face to face interview with District Medical Officer, Dr. Alisha Bonadie aired January 31st 2025 on HFMD - interview starts from 2hrs:
<https://www.facebook.com/share/v/18drmKCmP3/?mibextid=wwXIfr>
4. Facebook -
<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/17GMBWkrWJ/?mibextid=wwXIfr>
5. Instagram –
<https://www.instagram.com/reel/DF3Y7mIvO8V/?igsh=eno2dGR6bDI4Ynpq>
6. Website - <https://health.gov.vc/health>