

Information for you and your physician



Fifth Disease the disease caused by Parvovirus B19, can often be diagnosed by observing the characteristic "slapped-cheek" rash, flu-like symptoms and arthralgia (joint pains) associated with the disease. In some cases of exposure however, symptoms are not evident and a blood test should be performed to determine whether exposure and infection have occurred. Teachers are at special risk of exposure because most infections occur in young children, thereby leading to school outbreaks. If you are not immune to infection and become exposed or infected during pregnancy, the virus can potentially harm your unborn child. You can be tested for your **fifth disease** immune status and if required, your physician can take appropriate steps to protect your pregnancy.

Your physician or clinic can take a blood sample and send to a laboratory for analysis. Testing can detect the levels of the specific antibodies that your body produces in response to the virus.

The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved two tests that detect exposure to **fifth disease**. These tests detect Immunoglobulin M (IgM) antibodies and Immunoglobulin G (IgG) antibodies and can be used on women of childbearing age to determine their immune status if exposure to **fifth disease** is suspected. If immunoglobulin M (IgM) is detected, the test result shows that you have recently had or currently have an infection. The presence of immunoglobulin G (IgG) indicates immunity to **fifth disease**. If IgG and IgM antibodies are absent, you are not immune to the disease and are at risk of becoming infected.

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You can request that your physician perform these simple tests as part of your routine prenatal testing. If you know your immune status, you can make the choice to avoid exposure should an outbreak occur. If you are pregnant and have been infected, your physician can monitor your pregnancy closely and take appropriate steps to manage any complications that may arise as a result of your exposure.

A typical clinical management plan for **fifth disease** / Parvovirus B19 infected pregnant women is as follows:

Clinical Management of Parvovirus B19 Infected Pregnant Women

