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## • FIFTH DISEASE (PARVOVIRUS B-19).

This is a common viral illness that affects 70% of children 5 - 15 years, and at times it may occur in children under 5. The virus is known as Parvovirus B-19, it is generally a benign illness but in selected patients serious complications have been reported.

### Classical clinical presentation is as follows:

- Flu - like symptoms and on - off mild low grade fever 100.0 - 101°F, for about 1 - 3 weeks duration.
- Classic bright red cheeks, "slapped cheeks" appearance, x 3-5 days.
- Generalized rash, often itchy and typically reticulate "lace - like" or "net - like" pattern in trunk, buttocks, arms and thighs, it happens on - off for about 1 - 5 weeks. Sun exposure, heat and exercise increase the intensity of the rash.
- Other less common symptoms: joint pain and swelling, general fatigue, low appetite.

### Complications of this illness:

Uncommon but serious complications may be:

- Aplastic crisis: severe form of anemia that presents only in children with congenital hemolytic anemia.
- Susceptible pregnant women: first trimester spontaneous abortion or "miscarriage", and Fetal Hydrops, a severe form of fetal anemia.