



Frequently asked questions about

Enterovirus D68

From the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

What is Enterovirus D68?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), non-polio enteroviruses are fairly common and are associated with 10 - 15 million infections in the United States each year. Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) is one of many strains of non-polio enteroviruses.

EV-D68 infections are thought to occur less commonly than infections with other enteroviruses. EV-D68 was first identified in California in 1962. Compared with other enteroviruses, EV-D68 has been rarely reported in the United States during the last 40 years.

What are the signs and symptoms of EV-D68?

EV-D68 has been reported to cause mild to severe respiratory illness. However, the full spectrum of EV-D68 is not well known. Symptoms of EV-D68 infection can include wheezing, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, coughing, bluing of the lips, fever, confusion and racing heart rate. While some infected individuals will experience mild and self-limited illness and respond well to the treatment of symptoms, others may develop severe respiratory illness and require hospitalization.

How do I treat EV-D68?

There are no specific treatments or anti-viral medications available for treating EV-D68 infections. Many infections will be mild and will require only supportive care. Supportive care such as bed rest and drinking plenty of fluids, combined with fever reducers, decongestants, expectorants and use of vaporizers, can do much to make an ill person more comfortable. Parents of children, however, are cautioned not to use aspirin for children or young adults under the age of 19 years.

Some people with severe respiratory illness caused by EV-D68 may need to be hospitalized and receive intensive supportive therapy. Children and young adults with a history of asthma may be more susceptible to developing more severe illness.

How do I protect my child from EV-D68?

There are no vaccines for preventing EV-D68 infections. The health department offers the following risk reduction suggestions:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid kissing, hugging and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are ill;
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toy and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.

When should I seek emergency medical assistance?

Seek medical attention immediately if your child:

- Is breathing fast or having trouble breathing
- Has a bluish skin color
- Is not drinking enough fluids
- Has severe or persistent vomiting
- Is not waking up or interacting
- Is irritable and does not want to be held
- Has other health conditions and develops symptoms, including a fever and/or cough

In infants, watch for the signs above as well as:

- Inability to eat
- Trouble breathing
- No tears when crying
- Significantly fewer wet diapers than normal

For more information about communicable diseases and other important health information, visit us on the web:

www.bhsj.org

Or call your local Health Department office at:

Coldwater
279-9561 x 0105#

Hillsdale
437-7395 x 0110#

Three Rivers
273-2161 x 0241#