ENTEROVIRUS D68
FAQ

Prince George's County Health Department
ENTEROVIRUS D68 DISEASE
Frequently Asked Questions

Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) is one of more than 100 non-polio enteroviruses. Enteroviruses are a group of viruses that include the polioviruses (viruses that cause polio) along with other types of viruses.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF EV-D68 INFECTION?

Anyone with respiratory illness should contact their doctor if they are having difficulty breathing or if their symptoms are getting worse.

EV-D68 can cause mild to severe respiratory illness.

- Mild symptoms may include fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough, and body and muscle aches.
- Severe symptoms may include wheezing and difficulty breathing.

HOW DOES THE VIRUS SPREAD?

Since EV-D68 causes respiratory illness, the virus can be found in an infected person's saliva, nasal mucus, or sputum. EV-D68 likely spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches a surface that is then touched by others.

In the United States, people are more likely to get infected with enteroviruses in the summer and fall.

WHO IS AT RISK?

In general, infants, children, and teenagers are most likely to get infected with enteroviruses and become ill. That's because they do not yet have immunity (protection) from previous exposures to these viruses. Adults can get infected with enteroviruses, but they are more likely to have no symptoms or mild symptoms.

Children with asthma may have a higher risk for severe respiratory illness caused by EV-D68 infection.

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

EV-D68 can only be diagnosed by doing specific lab tests on specimens from a person's nose and throat.

The CDC recommends that clinicians only consider EV-D68 testing for patients with severe respiratory illness and when the cause is unclear. Clinicians should contact their local health department for guidance.

WHAT ARE THE TREATMENTS?

There is no specific treatment for people with respiratory illness caused by EV-D68. For mild respiratory illness, consult your physician if you are unclear of what over-the-counter medications for pain and fever.

Some people with severe respiratory illness may need to be hospitalized.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

You can help prevent yourself from getting and spreading EV-D68 and other respiratory illnesses by following these steps:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or shirt sleeve, not your hands.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.

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Source: CDC