



Frequently Asked Questions: Enterovirus D68

(Updated September 19, 2014)

What is Enterovirus D68?

Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) is a virus that can cause respiratory illness.

EV-D68 is one of a large group of very common viruses called enteroviruses. Most people who get infected with enteroviruses do not get sick.

EV-D68 infections are rare compared to other enteroviruses. However, since mid-August, EV-D68 has led to children from many parts of the United States, including New York City, being hospitalized.

What are the symptoms?

People who get sick with EV-D68 can have mild to severe respiratory problems, though severe cases that require hospitalization are rare. Other symptoms can include runny nose, sneezing, coughing and body aches.

How is the EV-D68 virus spread?

Researchers are still learning exactly how the virus spreads between people. It likely spreads through coughing or sneezing, or touching a surface that is contaminated with the respiratory secretions (such as saliva or mucus) of an infected person.

Who is at risk?

In general, infants, children and teenagers are most likely to get sick with enteroviruses. Children with asthma appear to be at higher risk for breathing problems if infected with the EV-D68 virus.

Is there a vaccine?

No. There is no vaccine for preventing EV-D68 infection.

Is treatment available?

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 and other enteroviruses. If symptoms are mild, over-the-counter medications for pain and fever can help. (Aspirin should not be given to children.) People with more serious illness may need to be hospitalized.

How can I protect myself and my children from EV-D68?

These steps can protect against enteroviruses, including EV-D68, as well as other seasonal illnesses:

- Wash hands regularly with **soap and water** for 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer does not work against enteroviruses.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, especially if your hands are unwashed.
- Do not kiss, hug or share food or drinks with someone who is sick.
- Clean frequently-touched surfaces, including doorknobs and toys.
- If you are sick, stay home so that you do not get other people sick.
- Get vaccinated against influenza, another respiratory virus that is common in the fall and winter season. Getting infected with both EV-D68 and influenza at the same time could lead to severe respiratory illness.

What should people with asthma do?

- Talk with your doctor about any concerns. If your child has asthma, make sure his or her treatment plan is up-to-date.
- If your doctor prescribes a long-term control asthma medication, take it regularly as prescribed.
- Carry your quick-relief medication at all times. If you have new or worse symptoms, talk to a doctor ***right away***.
- Get the flu vaccine as soon as possible.
- If your child has asthma, make sure his or her teacher knows about the condition and is aware of how to respond to key symptoms.