

Enterovirus D68 and Schools

What is enterovirus D 68 (EV-D68)?

Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) is one of many enteroviruses, a type of virus. This virus was first identified in California in 1962, but it has not been commonly reported in the United States.

What kind of illness does it cause?

EV-D68 can cause mild to severe respiratory illness. Mild symptoms may include fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough, and body and muscle aches.

Currently there is an outbreak that was first identified in Missouri and Illinois that has spread to 8 other states. Most of the children who got very ill with EV-D68 infection in Missouri and Illinois had difficulty breathing, and some had wheezing.

Who is most likely to get infected?

In general, infants, children, and teenagers are most likely to get infected with enteroviruses and become ill. Children with asthma or a history of wheezing are more likely to get infected.

How is it spread?

Since EV-D68 causes respiratory illness, the virus can be found in an infected person's respiratory secretions, such as saliva, nasal mucus, or sputum. EV-D68 likely spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches contaminated surfaces. Encourage children to cover their cough with a tissue or cough into their sleeve.

What can schools do?

Schools can educate students about good hand-washing technique and promote routine hand-washing and ensure that children have access to hand-washing facilities and supplies.

Children with respiratory symptoms should not attend school while they have symptoms like coughing and sneezing.

Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as doorknobs and light switches.

What can parents do?

Keep children home from school if they are sick.

Encourage good hand-washing. Teach children to avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.

If their child has asthma, they should regularly take medicines and maintain control of their illness during this time since asthma is a risk factor for infection.

As of September 16, 2014, there are no confirmed cases of EV-D68 in New Mexico. Testing will be done at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for suspected cases.