
Enterovirus D68: Frequently Asked Questions for School Health Professionals

What are enteroviruses?

- Enteroviruses are very common viruses; there are more than 100 different types.
- Around 10 to 15 million enterovirus infections occur in the United States each year.
- Most infected people have no symptoms or only mild symptoms, but some infections can be serious.
- Infants, children, and teenagers are most likely to get infected with enteroviruses and become sick.
- Fall is a common time for enteroviruses to cause respiratory illness.

What is enterovirus D68?

- Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) infections are less common than infections with other enteroviruses.
- EV-D68 was first identified in California in 1962.
- The Minnesota Department of Health Public Health Laboratory has identified EV-D68 in Minnesota every year since 2011.
- No recent cases of EV-D68 have been identified in Minnesota.

What are the symptoms of enterovirus D68?

- It can cause symptoms such as a runny nose, sore throat, cough, wheezing, rash, and a fever.
- Less often, enteroviruses can cause pneumonia, meningitis (swelling of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord), or encephalitis (swelling of the brain).
- Some individuals, especially those with underlying conditions, such as asthma or a weakened immune system, may experience more severe complications including difficulty breathing.
- If a person has severe symptoms, contact a health care provider or emergency services.

How is enterovirus D68 spread to others?

- EV-D68 is found in saliva, nasal mucus, or sputum.
- Like a cold or influenza, EV-D68 spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches surfaces.

What can we do to prevent the spread of enterovirus D68 in schools?

- There are no vaccines for preventing EV-D68 infections.
- You can help protect yourself from respiratory illnesses by following these steps:
 - Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
 - Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick
 - Use standard disinfection procedures for surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are not effective against enteroviruses, therefore vigilant hand washing is encouraged.
- The EV-D68 virus does not live long outside the body. Once a surface is dry, it likely does not contain live virus.

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How should School Health Professionals report respiratory illness such as enterovirus D68?

- Respiratory illnesses should be reported using the Influenza-like Illness Report Form, www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/diseases/flu/school/report.pdf
- Send in the report form once at the beginning of each outbreak. You should still report when you have suspected influenza or influenza-like illness later in the school year.
- As always, remind parents to keep kids home when they are sick.

Where can I get more information?

- Information about enteroviruses
 - MDH website: www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/respiratory/index.html
 - CDC website: www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/
- Hennepin county parent fact sheet on enteroviruses:
www.hennepin.us/~media/hennepinus/residents/health-medical/documents/1305-entero-parent.pdf