



NEWS

R E L E A S E

Illinois Department of Public Health

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Illinois Department of Public Health Watching for Possible Outbreaks of Circulating Virus

Cases of an uncommon enterovirus found in the Midwest

SPRINGFIELD – Several hospitals in Illinois and Missouri have recently reported clusters of severe respiratory illness in community members, especially children. Testing of some cases by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identified an enterovirus, EV-D68. While there are more than 100 types of enteroviruses, which are very common viruses of respiratory illness, EV-D68 is less common.

“The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is closely monitoring the increase in respiratory illness found in some hospitals,” said IDPH Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck. “While we are seeing some severe illnesses and take these very seriously, it’s important to know that the steps you can take to avoid becoming ill, and the treatment for this, are similar to those of most illnesses.”

Enteroviruses are transmitted through close contact with an infected person, or by touching objects or surfaces that are contaminated with the virus and then touching the mouth, nose, or eyes. To help protect yourself and others from enterovirus infections:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Avoid close contact (touching and shaking hands) with people who are sick
- Clean and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces
- Stay home when sick

Symptoms of enterovirus illness can include fever, runny nose, sneezing, coughing and body aches. Because EV-D68 has not been reported commonly, the full spectrum of illness due to this type of enterovirus is not well known.

“If you, or your child, are experiencing cold like symptoms and are having difficulty breathing, contact your health care provider right away,” said Dr. Hasbrouck.

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 infections and no specific anti-viral medications currently available for this purpose, which is why it is important to take steps to protect yourself.

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IDPH continues to implement its [Five Year Strategy 2014-2018](#) to maximize IDPH's effectiveness, influence and value for promoting wellness, health equity, safety and improved health outcomes. Strategic plan priorities include developing and expanding partnerships; improving data utilization; reducing health disparities; improving regulatory compliance; and branding, marketing and communicating IDPH's value.

http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/StrategicPlan_Final_2014-2018.pdf