



Dear Parent/Guardian,

You may have heard on the news about an increase in the number of cases of severe respiratory illnesses associated with Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) in several states throughout the country.

Enteroviruses are very common viruses. There are more than 100 types of enteroviruses. It is estimated that 10 to 15 million enterovirus infections occur in the United States each year. Most enterovirus infections in the U.S. occur seasonally during the summer and fall, and outbreaks tend to occur in several-year cycles. Enteroviruses can be spread by contact with feces or respiratory secretions of an infected person, introduction of the virus onto a mucous membrane after contact with a contaminated surface, or by the consumption of contaminated water. Although many enteroviruses are associated with different symptoms, the EV-D68 has almost exclusively been associated with respiratory disease; however the full extent of EV-D68 illness still remains unclear.

Many infections will be mild and require only treatment of symptoms. However, some infections may cause severe respiratory illness with the possibility of hospitalization to receive intensive supportive therapy.

EV-D68 has been described in association with new onset wheezing, asthma exacerbation and severe respiratory illness requiring possible hospitalization in those with or without history of underlying respiratory illness.

To help reduce the risk of infection with EV-D68, the following is recommended by the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC):

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick;
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick;
- Stay home when feeling sick, and obtain consultation from your health care provider.
- Cover your cough/sneeze. It is best to cough *or* sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands. If you cough/sneeze in your hands or in a tissue, make sure you wash your hands afterwards.

We have heard clearly from the CDC that alcohol-based hand sanitizers are not effective against enteroviruses. Hands need to be cleaned with soap and water.

The types of precautions to reduce the spread of this virus listed above are the same we should be taking for any illness. This helps us all to stay healthy.

As we get updates and guidance from DHEC/CDC, we will pass the information along by posting on our District's website in the School Health Services Section (Parent Information).

By working together, taking precautions, we can help to minimize the impact of any illness that can be spread to others. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact your school nurse or me at 321-2620.

Sincerely,  
Tricia Ulch, RN,BSN  
School Nurse Coordinator