



Indiana State Department of Health

Epidemiology Resource Center

Quick Facts

About...Enterovirus

What is Enterovirus?

Enteroviruses are common viruses and there are over 100 different types of enteroviruses. It is estimated that 10 to 15 million enterovirus infections occur in the United States each year. This is an estimation because enterovirus is not a reportable disease. Most people infected with enteroviruses 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. Most enterovirus infections in the United States occur seasonally during the summer and fall.

Enterovirus D68

Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) infections are thought to occur less commonly than infections with other enteroviruses.

What are the symptoms of Enterovirus?

- low-grade fever
- cough
- runny nose
- sneezing and body/muscle aches.

Infected individuals generally self-recover without incident by treating symptoms. However, some individuals, especially those with weakened immune systems or underlying medical conditions, such as asthma, may experience severe complications and require hospitalization with supportive therapy. Children with cold like symptoms that experience difficulty breathing, are asked to consult with their family physician for further evaluation.

EV-D68 usually can cause mild to severe respiratory illness. However, the full spectrum of EV-D68 illness is not well-defined.

How is Enterovirus spread?

EV-D68, like other enteroviruses, appears to spread through close contact with infected people.

Who is at risk for getting Enterovirus?

Infants, children, and teenagers are most likely to get infected with enteroviruses and become sick.

How do I know if I have Enterovirus?

See your health care provider. Lab testing is needed to confirm a diagnosis. Your health care provider may take a sample from the area in the back of your nose where your nose and throat meet.

How is Enterovirus treated?

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 infections.

- Many infections will be mild and self-limited, requiring only treatment of the symptoms.
- Some people with severe respiratory illness caused by EV-D68 may need to be hospitalized and receive intensive supportive therapy.

Because this is a virus, there is no antibiotic medicine that can be prescribed. No anti-viral medications are currently available for treating of EV-D68 infections.

How is Enterovirus prevented?

There are no vaccines for preventing EV-D68 infections. Ways to help reduce the risk of getting infected with EV-D68:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers. **Alcohol based hand sanitizers are not effective against Enterovirus.**
- 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.

This page was last reviewed September 9, 2014.