

Michigan Monitoring for Cases of Enterovirus

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is receiving reports indicating an increase in severe respiratory illness in children ages 5-17 across the state. MDCH is working with local health departments and hospitals to investigate these cases. At this time, Michigan has no confirmed cases of Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) associated with the national outbreak, but MDCH is forwarding samples to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for testing.

Nationally, clusters of EV-D68 infections have recently impacted the pediatric population in multiple states. Original reports described clusters of illness in Missouri and most recently Illinois. The majority of those cases had a previous medical history of asthma or prior wheezing. Currently, suspected cases are also being investigated in Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma and Utah.

Enteroviruses are very common viruses; there are more than 100 types. It is estimated that 10 to 15 million enterovirus infections occur in the United States each year. Symptoms of EV-D68 infection can include wheezing, difficulty breathing, fever and racing heart rate. Most people infected with enteroviruses have no symptoms or only mild symptoms, but some infections can be serious requiring hospitalization. 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. There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 infections but supportive care can be provided.

Young residents with asthma are encouraged to be vigilant in taking their asthma controlling medications. Further, Michiganders can protect themselves from enterovirus by taking general hygiene precautions:

- 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 doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.

Additional information about human EV-D68 can be found in today's CDC Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6038a1.htm>.

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