

# Get the Facts: Enterovirus D68

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There have been several stories in the news about a respiratory illness called enterovirus D68 or EV-D68. EV-D68 has affected children in a number of states in the Midwest, including Illinois. EV-D68 has led to some children being hospitalized. This fact sheet explains some basics about the illness and what you can do to help protect your child.

## What are Enteroviruses?

Enteroviruses are a group of viruses which are very common. Most people infected with enteroviruses do not get sick or they have only mild illness like a cold.

- It is estimated that 10 to 15 million people get enterovirus infections in the United States each year – most of which are not serious. In a very few cases, infections can be serious.
- Infants, children and teenagers are most likely to get infected with enteroviruses.
- Most enterovirus infections in the United States occur seasonally during the summer and fall.

## What is Enterovirus D68?

There are more than 100 different types of enteroviruses. EV-D68 is one type. It is not the most common type, but there have been a number of recent cases, including some that have led to hospitalizations.

## What are the Symptoms?

Many people with an enterovirus will have no symptoms at all. Others will have symptoms like a cold. These symptoms include runny nose, sneezing, coughing and body aches. Less commonly, children may develop difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, which require immediate medical attention.

## How do people get EV-D68?

Individuals get EV-D68 just like they get a cold. If you come into contact with a person who is sick, you can catch EV-D68 from them, especially if they cough or sneeze near you or if you touch a contaminated surface. This is why it is important for you to remind your children to wash their hands.

## What treatment is available?

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68. In many cases the symptoms of EV-D68 are mild and individuals will make a full recovery in a short amount of time. However, some people who develop difficulty breathing may need to be hospitalized.

## How can I prevent the spread of EV-D68?

You and your children can help protect yourselves by following these simple steps:

- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose and mouth if your hands are unwashed.
- Don't kiss, hug or share food or drinks with someone who is sick.
- Be sure to clean frequently-touched surfaces including doorknobs and toys.
- If you are sick, stay home so you don't get other people sick.
- If your child has asthma, be sure they follow their treatment regimens and contact their healthcare provider if there are any problems.

**Concerned parents with an ill child should contact their medical provider**