

[dkpdf-button]

What is enterovirus D68 infection?

Enterovirus D68 (or EV-D68) infection is a respiratory infection caused by EV-D68, a type of enterovirus. There are over 100 types of enteroviruses and about 10-15 million enterovirus infections occur each year in the United States. These viruses are most common during the summer and fall, though it is possible to become infected year-round.

Who gets EV-D68 infection?

In general, infants, children, and teenagers are most likely to get enterovirus infections and become ill. This is because they may not have immunity (protection) from previous exposures. Children with asthma might have a higher risk for severe respiratory illness caused by EV-D68 infection. Adults can become infected with enteroviruses, but they are more likely to have no symptoms or mild symptoms.

How is EV-D68 infection spread?

Because EV-D68 infection causes respiratory illness, the virus can be found in an infected person's saliva, nasal mucus, or sputum. EV-D68 likely spreads when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches a surface that is then touched by others. It can also be spread through contact with infected poop (like not washing hands well enough after changing a diaper or using the bathroom).

What are the symptoms of EV-D68 infection?

EV-D68 can cause mild to severe respiratory illness, or no symptoms at all. Mild symptoms can include runny nose, sneezing, cough, body aches, and muscle aches. Serious symptoms can include wheezing and difficulty breathing. In rare cases, EV-D68 can cause acute flaccid myelitis (AFM), a dangerous neurological condition. Mostly affecting children, the symptoms of AFM include, arm or leg weakness, pain in the neck, back, arms, or legs, difficulty swallowing or slurred speech, difficulty moving the eyes or drooping eyelids, facial droop or weakness.

How soon after exposure do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually appear 3-6 days after exposure.

How is EV-D68 infection diagnosed?

EV-D68 infection can be diagnosed by doing specific laboratory tests on nose, throat, or blood samples. Many hospitals and some doctor's offices can test ill patients to see if they have enterovirus infection. Specific testing to determine the type of enterovirus, like EV-D68, is available only through certain labs.

What is the treatment for EV-D68 infection?

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 infection. Some people with severe EV-D68 infections might need to be hospitalized to receive intensive supportive treatment.

Do people who have been in contact with someone with EV-D68 infection need to be tested and treated?

Contacts of people with EV-D68 infection do not need to be tested. Contacts who develop symptoms should talk to their healthcare provider as needed to manage their illness.

How can EV-D68 infection be prevented?

There are several steps to take to prevent EV-D68 infection:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, and help young children do the same. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Wash your hands especially after coughing and sneezing, before and after caring for an ill person and before making food or eating.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in the trash. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact (such as kissing, hugging, sharing cups, or sharing eating utensils) with people who are sick, and when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.

Those with asthma should also take the following steps:

- Discuss and update your asthma action plan with your primary care provider.
- Take your prescribed asthma medications as directed, especially long-term control medication(s).
- Be sure to keep your reliever medication with you.
- Get a flu vaccine when available each year.
- If you develop new or worsening asthma symptoms, follow the steps of your asthma action plan. If your symptoms do not go away, call your doctor right away.
- Parents should make sure the child's caregiver or teacher is aware of his or her condition, and that they know how to help if the child experiences any symptoms related to asthma.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent EV-D68 infection.

How can I get more information about EV-D68 infection?

- If you have concerns about Enterovirus D68 Infection, contact your healthcare provider.
- Call your [local health department](#).
- Visit the [CDC page on EV-D68](#) for more information.

Opens pdf to download

Opens document to download

Opens in a new window

External link will open in new window. Click link to exit Virginia Department of Health Website.