

PRESS RELEASE

Respiratory Virus Suspected to Have Arrived in Utah

September 10, 2014: Enterovirus D68, one of many non-polio enteroviruses, has recently appeared, after having been rarely reported in the U.S. for the last forty years.

According to the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, "hospitals in Missouri and Illinois are seeing more children than usual with severe respiratory illness caused by enterovirus D68. Several other states are investigating clusters of children with severe respiratory illness, possibly due to enterovirus D68".

According to the Primary Children's Hospital on September 9, 2014, "Primary Children's has seen increased numbers of children admitted to the hospital with serious respiratory disease symptoms, including pneumonia and asthma. Many are testing positive for the family of viruses that includes EV- D68, but we do not have a test that identifies the specific strain. We are waiting on confirmation from the CDC, but we suspect EV-D68 may be here in Utah".

This virus has already affected more than a thousand children in over 10 states and is likely to continue to spread. The CDC is watching this situation closely and is assisting states with testing of specimens.

Symptoms of EV-D68 are reported to include mild to severe respiratory illness. The virus can cause mild, cold-like symptoms including runny noses, coughing, difficulty breathing and wheezing. However, the full spectrum of EV-D68 is not well-defined.

Treatment is not specific, and many infections will be mild and self-limited, requiring only treatment of symptoms. Those with severe respiratory illness may need to be hospitalized and receive intensive supportive therapy.

Prevention is not currently available in antiviral medications or vaccines. However, you can help protect yourself from respiratory illness by practicing the following:

1. Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. This is especially important for those changing diapers.
2. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing food or drink with those suspected of having a virus.
4. Disinfect touched surfaces frequently, including toys and doorknobs.
5. Stay home if you are ill, and keep your kids home from school if they are ill.

What parents should know is that most children with cold symptoms are not going to get severely ill. However, there are instances of long-term effects. If your child has difficulty breathing or is wheezing, you should see your primary care provider or seek medical attention. Children with asthma may be more at risk, and should follow their asthma care plan and see a physician if symptoms are worsening.



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Uintah Basin Healthcare is a community not-for-profit healthcare system, serving the Uintah Basin since 1944. Today, Uintah Basin Healthcare is the largest and most comprehensive rural-based healthcare system in the state of Utah.