



## Frequently Asked Questions: Enterovirus D68

*(Updated September 19, 2014)*

### **What is Enterovirus D68?**

Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) is a virus that can cause respiratory illness.

EV-D68 is one of a large group of very common viruses called enteroviruses. Most people who get infected with enteroviruses do not get sick.

EV-D68 infections are rare compared to other enteroviruses. However, since mid-August, EV-D68 has led to children from many parts of the United States, including New York City, being hospitalized.

### **What are the symptoms?**

People who get sick with EV-D68 can have mild to severe respiratory problems, though severe cases that require hospitalization are rare. Other symptoms can include runny nose, sneezing, coughing and body aches.

### **How is the EV-D68 virus spread?**

Researchers are still learning exactly how the virus spreads between people. It likely spreads through coughing or sneezing, or touching a surface that is contaminated with the respiratory secretions (such as saliva or mucus) of an infected person.

### **Who is at risk?**

In general, infants, children and teenagers are most likely to get sick with enteroviruses. Children with asthma appear to be at higher risk for breathing problems if infected with the EV-D68 virus.

### **Is there a vaccine?**

No. There is no vaccine for preventing EV-D68 infection.

### **Is treatment available?**

There is no specific treatment for EV-D68 and other enteroviruses. If symptoms are mild, over-the-counter medications for pain and fever can help. (Aspirin should not be given to children.) People with more serious illness may need to be hospitalized.

### **How can I protect myself and my children from EV-D68?**

These steps can protect against enteroviruses, including EV-D68, as well as other seasonal illnesses:

- Wash hands regularly with **soap and water** for 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer does not work against enteroviruses.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, especially if your hands are unwashed.
- Do not kiss, hug or share food or drinks with someone who is sick.
- Clean frequently-touched surfaces, including doorknobs and toys.
- If you are sick, stay home so that you do not get other people sick.
- Get vaccinated against influenza, another respiratory virus that is common in the fall and winter season. Getting infected with both EV-D68 and influenza at the same time could lead to severe respiratory illness.

#### **What should people with asthma do?**

- Talk with your doctor about any concerns. If your child has asthma, make sure his or her treatment plan is up-to-date.
- If your doctor prescribes a long-term control asthma medication, take it regularly as prescribed.
- Carry your quick-relief medication at all times. If you have new or worse symptoms, talk to a doctor ***right away***.
- Get the flu vaccine as soon as possible.
- If your child has asthma, make sure his or her teacher knows about the condition and is aware of how to respond to key symptoms.