



Buncombe County Health & Human Services

Aging and Veteran's Services ~ Social Work Services
Public Assistance & Work Support Strategies ~ Public Health
Amanda Stone, MSW
Health and Human Services Director

To: Buncombe County Medical Providers
From: Dr. Jennifer Mullendore, Medical Director
Date: Wednesday, September 24, 2014
RE: Health alert from the Buncombe County Department of Health

Human Enterovirus D68 Guidance for NC Providers

Earlier this week, the NC DHHS **confirmed the presence of Enterovirus D68 in NC.**

- Per DHHS, the confirmed cases were scattered across the state.
- Buncombe County Health and Human Services has not heard of any confirmed cases locally; however, that doesn't mean it isn't here.

Please see the media release below from NC DHHS reporting the first confirmation of enterovirus D68 infections in North Carolina.

- I have also attached the press release that Buncombe County Health and Human Services sent out yesterday to local media.
- An updated version of provider guidance from NC DPH reflecting the presence of EV-D68 in NC also is attached [to](#) this email.

- **No changes to recommendations on diagnosis, management or infection prevention were made.**

Because there is no vaccine or specific treatment for EV-D68, the message continues to be that preventive measures are the most important thing for all of us to do to protect against EV-D68 and other respiratory illnesses.

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers or blowing your nose.
- 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 toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- Stay home when feeling sick.

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- Cover your cough or sneeze with your arm.
- Get your flu vaccine. Although flu vaccines will not protect against EV-D68, they can help prevent another important cause of respiratory illness.
- **If you or your children have asthma, take your medications as prescribed and make sure your asthma is under good control. Follow your asthma action plan.**
- **Watch children, teens, and young adults for breathing difficulties, especially if they have asthma or other lung problems. If you or your child have cold symptoms and are having difficulty breathing symptoms, seek immediate medical care.**

Feel free to share this information with your patients, colleagues, family and friends.

If you have any questions, please call the Disease Control staff at your local health department (#250-5109 for Buncombe County).

Thanks,

Jenni

Jennifer Mullendore, MD, MSPH
 Medical Director
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"Health care is vital to all of us some of the time, but public health is vital to all of us all of the time." --
 Dr. C. Everett Koop, former US Surgeon General

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THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Press Release

NC DHHS Confirms Enterovirus D68 Has Reached North Carolina

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, September 22, 2014

Contact: news@dhhs.nc.gov

919-855-4840

Raleigh, NC - The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services today confirmed the presence of enterovirus D68, or EV-D68, in six patients from North Carolina. The specimens that tested positive for EV-D68 were obtained from children ages 10 and under with respiratory illnesses. Testing was conducted at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on specimens submitted from hospitals across the state.

Specific information about the children, including county of residence or hospital location, is not being released in order to protect patient confidentiality.

"DHHS' Division of Public Health has been monitoring this situation very closely," said Dr. Zack Moore, a pediatrician and epidemiologist with the Division of Public Health. "The confirmed cases were located in different parts of the state, so it is important for everyone to take necessary actions to protect yourself from EV-D68 and other respiratory viruses. There are no vaccines and no specific treatments for EV-D68, so prevention is the best option."

There are more than 100 types of enteroviruses and 10-15 million infections across the US each year. Enteroviruses are common viruses that can cause a range of symptoms, include runny nose, coughing, mouth sores, fever and body aches. Some patients will also develop wheezing and difficulty breathing.

"EV-D68 is one of many enteroviruses that can cause illness," said Dr. Moore. "Enterovirus infections are not generally life-threatening but can sometimes be severe, especially for children with asthma or other underlying respiratory conditions. If you or your child experience cold-like symptoms and

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difficulty breathing, contact your health care provider right away."

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. Health officials are recommending that people take the following actions to protect themselves from infection with EV-D68 and other respiratory illnesses:

1. Wash hands vigorously and often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers.
2. Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Avoid kissing, hugging and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.
4. Frequently disinfect touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.

Since people with asthma are higher risk for respiratory illnesses, health officials are reminding everyone with asthma to take their medications as prescribed and make sure their asthma is under good control. Health officials are also recommending getting a flu vaccine as soon as possible to help prevent another important cause of respiratory illness that could be going around at the same time.

Since mid-August, EV-D68 has been linked to clusters of respiratory illness in 27 other states, including some illnesses that have been severe.

For more information, visit the CDC website on Enterovirus D68: <http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/about/ev-d68.html>.

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