

Medical Alert...Current Situation with Enterovirus D68:

Several states around Nebraska have been reporting infections with possible Enterovirus D68. In some areas many children have been hospitalized. The following precautions should be taken in every household:

Precautions for everyone:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers.
- Alcohol hand sanitizer is also effective unless hands are visibly soiled.
- 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, and obtain consultation from your health care provider.

Information about Enterovirus:

Children from 6 weeks to 16 years have been most affected by the current outbreak, especially those with a history of asthma or wheezing. The onset of symptoms can be quick. Within hours, typical cold symptoms have turned into breathing difficulties, sometimes accompanied by wheezing, cough, rash or fever.

Enteroviruses are very common viruses; more than 100 types are known. Each year, an estimated 10 to 15 million enterovirus infections occur in the United States. Most people infected with enteroviruses have no symptoms or only mild symptoms, but some infections can be serious. Infants, children and teenagers are most likely to get infected and become ill from enteroviruses. Most enterovirus infections in the U.S. occur seasonally during the summer and fall, and outbreaks tend to occur in several-year cycles. EV-D68 infections occur less commonly than those with other enteroviruses. EV-D68, like other enteroviruses, appears to spread through close contact with infected people. Unlike the majority of enteroviruses that cause a clinical disease manifesting as a mild upper respiratory illness, febrile rash illness or neurologic illness (such as aseptic meningitis and encephalitis), EV-D68 has been associated almost exclusively with respiratory disease. While EV-D68 is reported to cause mild to severe respiratory illness, the full spectrum of illness caused by EV-D68 is not well-defined.

Guidance to Parents:

Children with cold like symptoms that experience difficulty breathing are asked to consult with their family physician for further evaluation.