

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Enterovirus – D68: What you need to know

Enteroviruses cause a wide range of illness; most are associated with the common cold, but others are associated with lower respiratory tract, skin and mucous membrane, and central nervous system diseases.

Enterovirus- D68 (EV-D68) is a previously rare enterovirus that can cause mild to severe illness. EV-D68 is unusual in that it is more often associated with lower respiratory illness. The virus is spread person-to-person through contact with the respiratory secretions of infected persons.

In August 2014, several children’s hospitals in the US reported increases in children hospitalized with severe respiratory illness. EV-D68 was identified in many of these children; notably, 70% of the children had a history of asthma or wheezing.

As of September 16, a total of 130 cases of EV-D68 have been confirmed in 12 US states. No deaths have been reported; however some children have required ICU admission.

EV-D68 is not reportable in Canada and consequently, cases are likely under-reported. Ontario, Alberta and BC have confirmed cases to date.

Clinicians should consider EV-D68 infections in children presenting with severe respiratory illness and report any increase or unusual clusters/outbreaks of respiratory illness to their local public health authority.

Healthcare providers should implement droplet and contact precautions, in addition to routine practices for patients with suspected EV-D68.. Surfaces should be cleaned with a hospital-grade disinfectant with a Drug Identification Number or DIN and a label claim for non-enveloped viruses.

Members of the public can take action to prevent the spread of this virus. Hands should be washed frequently with soap and water, or cleaned with an alcohol-based hand rub containing at least 70% alcohol. As well, coughing and sneezing into your sleeve can help minimize the risk of spread of illness. Children should be kept home from school if they have cold-like symptoms. If symptoms of a lower respiratory illness develop, the child should be assessed by a healthcare provider, especially if the child has a history of asthma or wheezing.

About IPAC Canada

IPAC Canada, formerly CHICA–Canada, is a national, multi-disciplinary, voluntary association of Infection Prevention and Control Professionals (ICPs) with 21 chapters across the country dedicated to the health of Canadians by promoting excellence in the practice of infection prevention and

control. Visit IPAC Canada's website (www.ipac-canada.org) for infection prevention and control information.

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