

## Respiratory Illness Outbreak

Submitted by Naval Hospital Pensacola

There have been recent outbreaks of respiratory illnesses involving enterovirus D-68 (EV-D68) that have been reported in multiple states including Florida and Alabama. The illness primarily affects children, and the most common symptoms are a mild cold or respiratory illness. For some individuals, the illness may progress to wheezing and difficulty breathing. On rare occasions, hospitalization may be required. There is no specific treatment for people with a respiratory illness caused by EV-D68, but for mild respiratory illnesses, over-the-counter medications for pain and fever can be taken (Aspirin should not be given to children).

To help prevent being infected by this or similar respiratory illnesses, follow these steps:

- Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds (alcohol based hand sanitizers are not effective against viruses like EV-D68)
- 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
- Since people with asthma are higher risk for respiratory illnesses, they should regularly take medicines and maintain control of their illness during this time

Respiratory illnesses can be caused by many different viruses and have similar symptoms. If you believe you have a respiratory illness, please contact your doctor if you are having difficulty breathing, or if symptoms are getting worse. Anyone with a respiratory illness, such as EV-D68, should avoid contact with others as much as possible to limit the spread of the disease. It is highly recommended that those infected with a respiratory illness remain at home, especially children, to avoid increased rates of illness within the community.

For more information on EV-D68, please visit <http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/about/EV68-infographic.html>.