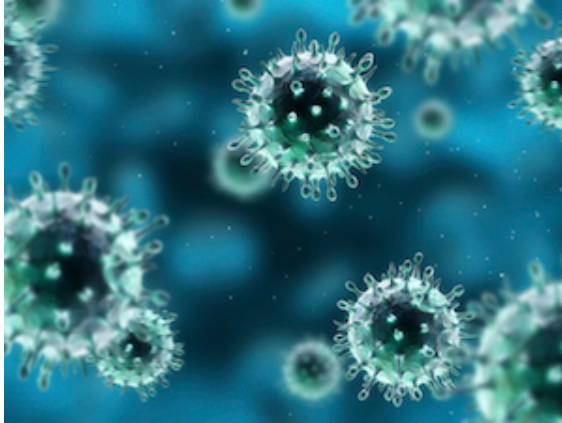


Contact Us

Cranford	(908)272-7990
Lincoln Park	(973)696-6687
Montville	(973)575-5540
North Haledon	(973)636-9000
Oakland	(201)337-3412
Verona	(973)239-2600

Some Perspective on the Enterovirus



It may start out like a regular cold. However, the enterovirus is anything but. Before you know it, you could be gasping for your next breath. Now that we've seen our first confirmed case of Enterovirus D-68 (EV-D68) in New Jersey, what do you need to know about this potentially serious virus? Read on.

What is the enterovirus—and should you be alarmed?

Enteroviruses are very common. There are more than 100 types causing about 10 million to 15 million infections in the U.S. each year, according to the Centers for Disease Control. EV-D68 is one of those types. It's a respiratory illness that spreads through close contact, and children are more susceptible.

In most cases, the symptoms mimic those of the common cold. The problem is that people who have asthma or other respiratory disorders, particularly children, can experience more severe symptoms that are serious enough to send them to the hospital. Being well informed is your best defense so that you can take action if needed.

How is it transmitted?

The virus is spread through bodily fluids such as saliva or nasal mucus. It can be transmitted when an infected person coughs on, sneezes on, or touches another person or surface.

What are its symptoms?

It may look like a cold at first, but the virus can progress to severe respiratory distress. Symptoms include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Skin rash
- Mouth blisters
- Body and muscle aches
- Difficulty breathing (in some cases)

How is it treated?

EV-D68 is a virus infection and will clear on its own. Antibiotics do not help, and presently there are no antiviral drugs or vaccine for this infection. But if you or your child experiences symptoms such as wheezing or difficulty breathing, seek immediate medical attention.

How can I protect myself?

You can help protect yourself from respiratory illnesses by following these steps:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers.
- Avoid touching your 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 at higher risk for respiratory illnesses, they should regularly take medicines and maintain control of their asthma during this time. They should also take advantage of an influenza vaccine, since people with asthma have a difficult time with respiratory illnesses, in general.

Questions? Call us.

We're carefully watching the developments. Call us with any questions or concerns.

For more information

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Enterovirus D68; [learn more in English](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Enterovirus D68; [learn more in Spanish](#)

By Robert Eidus, MD, FAAFP, and Stephanie Szylar, RN

Dr. Eidus is president of Vanguard Medical Group and leads the Cranford office. He spent the first 11 years of his career in academic family medicine and spent several years in a variety of management positions focused on creating systems to improve the quality of health care. Dr. Eidus has served for 14 years with the National Committee on Quality Assurance, is a past president of the New Jersey Academy of Family Physicians and participates in the EnquireNet national ambulatory care research network. He is also on the AAFP Commission on Practice and Quality and represents New Jersey in numerous activities to foster patient-centered care.



Stephanie Szylar, RN is patient care coordinator and staff manager at Vanguard Medical Group at Cranford. Previously she was at JFK Medical Center in the ICU/CCU. She is a graduate of Kean University, and the JFK Muhlenberg Harold B. & Dorothy A. Snyder Schools (formerly the Muhlenburg School of Nursing). She is currently working toward an MSN Adult/Gero Nurse Practitioner degree at Seton Hall University, where she will graduate in May 2015. She is a current member of Sigma Theta Tau International for academic honors in nursing.



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