



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

**NEWS RELEASE--FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE**

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Enterovirus D68 Confirmed in Idaho

Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68), along with other respiratory illnesses, are circulating in Idaho, according to lab results received from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) today. The first results for five submitted samples from hospitalized children in eastern Idaho show one child tested positive for EV-D68, two tested positive for a different virus, and the remaining two were negative. All five children have been discharged from hospital care.

“Enterovirus infections are very common this time of year and can sometimes cause serious illness,” says Dr. Christine Hahn, state epidemiologist and Idaho Public Health medical director. “There are no vaccines for these common viruses, so parents need to be vigilant and make sure their families follow these simple but effective health interventions —wash your hands frequently, cover your cough and stay home when you are sick. This is especially important for children with asthma.”

EV-D68 is a respiratory infection that has caused multiple illnesses and hospitalizations nationally, primarily in children with asthma or reactive airway disease. The Idaho Division of Public Health is working with hospitals, healthcare providers and local public health districts to identify elevated levels of respiratory illnesses in Idaho communities. To date, there has been a slight increase in the number of respiratory illnesses in the Idaho Falls and Treasure Valley areas, but no other communities have reported higher-than-normal levels.

Idaho public health officials have submitted more than two dozen samples from hospitalized children to the CDC for testing. Results from CDC testing will be released by the Department of Health and Welfare as they become available.

Enterovirus infections are quite common; the virus infects 10-15 million people a year in the United States. There are more than 100 enterovirus strains, but EV-D68

was rarely identified until recently. More than 30 other states have confirmed EV-D68 infections, with many others reporting suspected cases.

Enteroviruses are transmitted through close contact with an infected person or by touching surfaces that are contaminated by the virus and then touching your mouth, nose or eyes. Symptoms of enterovirus illnesses include coughing, sneezing, a low-grade fever, runny nose and body aches. Most people recover without hospitalization. Since there is no vaccine, people can protect themselves and others by:

- Washing hands frequently and thoroughly. Clean frequently touched surfaces, including children's toys.
- Covering coughs and sneezes with a sleeve or a tissue.
- Staying home when sick to prevent spreading the disease to others.

Parents should be watchful of their children, especially if they have an underlying health condition such as asthma or a lung disease. Children with asthma should have preventative treatments, such as inhalers, on hand if prescribed. If a child is ill and begins to have trouble breathing or is wheezing, parents should contact their healthcare provider immediately.

For the latest updates concerning enteroviruses in Idaho, please follow us on Twitter @IDHW, visit our Facebook page www.facebook.com/IdahoHealthandWelfare or our web page at www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov . Information from the CDC is available at http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/about/EV-D68.html?s_cid=cdc_homepage_whatsnew_001