



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 Montgomery, AL 36104

Phone 334-206-5300 Fax 334-206-5520

www.adph.org

Children in Alabama being tested for Enterovirus D68

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Mary G. McIntyre, M.D., M.P.H.
(334) 206-5325

Reports of cases from across the nation have prompted concern among parents of children and teenagers about enterovirus D68 (EV-D68).

On Aug. 29, 2014, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) sent a message to all primary care physicians to consider testing for EV-D68 in children with severe respiratory illness and no other known cause. ADPH asked health care providers to report a cluster or outbreak of cases. While individual cases of enterovirus do not require reporting, a cluster or outbreak must be reported.

ADPH is currently investigating two clusters of respiratory illness in children, one in Mobile and one in north Alabama. Six specimens have been received and they have been sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for testing for EV-D68. It may take several weeks before ADPH receives those test results, because many states have submitted specimens to be tested.

In general, enteroviruses have various symptoms, including mild respiratory, fever, rash and neurologic illness. EV-D68 has more severe respiratory symptoms. There is no vaccine; treatment depends on the symptoms, and prevention is very important. To prevent EV-D68 and all other communicable viruses like influenza, people need to

- Wash their hands frequently
- Cover their cough
- Keep children home if ill
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups and eating utensils with sick people
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs

If you or a family member has severe respiratory symptoms, please contact your doctor and follow his/her advice.

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