



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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One additional case of Enterovirus D68 confirmed in an Alabama resident; providers asked to report cases of acute neurological illness of unknown cause in children

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health continues investigating clusters of respiratory illness in children, and one additional case not reported previously has been confirmed.

As of Sept. 30, 40 patients have been evaluated as part of this ongoing investigation; 21 have met criteria for testing and results have been received on 9 of these. Five results received were positive for EV-D68, 1 was positive for rhinovirus, 1 was positive for coxsackie virus B3, and 2 results were negative.

ADPH is not counting potential cases on an individual basis so it is unknown how many people in Alabama have been infected with enterovirus D68, nor does the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have a total count of cases in the U.S. ADPH is counting the number of tests submitted by the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories to CDC for testing and is tracking results.

Assistant State Health Officer Dr. Mary McIntyre said, "We have also been informed of a few potential cases of unknown neurological illness in children, but this has not been confirmed at this time. These reports may or may not be associated with the increase in enterovirus respiratory illnesses being seen."

The Alabama Department of Public Health has sent a Health Alert Network Advisory to health care providers to report whether children with acute neurologic illness of undetermined cause are being cared for in the state. The CDC has notified states of a cluster of nine pediatric patients in Colorado with acute neurologic illness of undetermined cause. These illnesses have occurred since Aug. 1 along with an increase of respiratory illnesses among children in Colorado.

CDC is prioritizing specimens being received and it is hoped results are back soon. 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 seek medical care if needed and follow these precautions:

* 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

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10/2/14