Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) is a rare syndrome characterized by rapid onset of flaccid weakness in one or more limbs with abnormalities of the spinal cord or brain grey matter on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

**Timing is Key for AFM**

- **Recognize AFM**
  - AFM tending occurs in **late summer or early fall**
  - Respiratory symptoms or fever consistent with a viral infection occurs less than a week before onset of limb weakness
  - Hospitalize patient immediately upon suspicion of AFM
  - **Don’t wait for CDC’s case classification to diagnosis or treat**

  **Symptoms**
  - Arm or leg weakness
  - Difficulty moving the eyes
  - Difficulty with swallowing
  - Pain in arms, legs, neck or back
  - Loss of muscle tone
  - Loss of reflexes
  - Facial drop or weakness
  - Slurred speech

- **Collect specimens & get a MRI**
  - Specimens should be collected as early as possible in the course of illness, **preferably on the day of limb weakness onset**
  - Specimens need to be sent to a State Public Health Laboratory, contact your county health department (CHD) to coordinate
  - Order an MRI of the entire spine and brain with and without Contrast
  - 3 Tesla scanners are preferred and axial/sagittal images are the most helpful

  **Additional information concerning specimen collection can be found in the**

  **Job Aid for Clinicians**

- **Report to the department of health**
  - Please report suspected cases of AFM to the Communicable Disease Report Card at: https://redcap.link/vbawnf

  **Items that need to be submitted**
  - MRI report
  - MRI images
  - Patient summary form

  For confirmed and probable cases, additional clinical information will be requested from the patient’s medical record such as admission & discharge notes, neurology & infectious disease consult notes, vaccination record, diagnostic laboratory results, and the EMG report (if done and available).

- **Diagnosis & medical management**
  - There are no proven ways to treat or prevent AFM
  - Providers should expedite neurology and infectious disease consults to discuss management and treatment

  **Long-term follow-up**
  - The state health department is conducting long-term follow-ups on cases to better understand AFM outcomes. It consists of a 9 question survey and medical records. Data will be shared with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
  - Follow-ups will occur at **60 days, 6 months, and 1 year** after limb weakness onset

  The AFM Physician Consult and Support Portal is available to help with patient diagnosis and medical management contact them at wearesrna.org/living-with-myelitis/resources/afm-physician-support-portal

To learn more about AFM surveillance, visit [cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis](https://cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis)

For additional questions, please contact your local county health department.