

Enterovirus-D68 (EV-D68)

October 9, 2014

On October 5 we posted on the District website an FAQ directly from the New Jersey Department of Health regarding this strain of virus, including precautions to reduce the likelihood of its spreading. Information was immediately shared with school nurses and with Principals. WE are now providing more complete, District-wide communication regarding what we know, based on the latest information from similar reputable sources.

As we do so, please keep in mind that even Health officials are still urging calm and caution rather than alarm, despite the extreme cases which have been fatal. Most of what you read in these materials is normal, common-sense precaution in the spread of any flu or other virus. We in the schools, at the request of our Nurses and through our operations department, are making additional preventive-type cleaning of desks and other hand-contact surfaces a regular and high-priority task.

As we do so, and as our schools emphasize the hand-washing and other precautions which can be helpful, we urge all parents of school-age children to read and understand the materials presented here and in other useful sources. This outbreak is not a cause for panic or extreme measures, but for renewed caution and good hygiene, especially for those most at risk. Please see the links below (including an updated FAQ), and contact your school nurse for additional information/questions.

- Bob Goldschmidt, Superintendent.

(see links and other information on next page>)

Latest FAQ from the NJ Dept. of Health:

http://education.state.nj.us/broadcasts/2014/OCT/08/12243/Enterovirus_D68_FAQs_updated%20final.pdf

From the Center for Disease Control:

<http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/outbreaks/EV-D68-outbreaks.html>

From the FAQ linked above:

How can I protect myself from becoming infected with EV-D68?

There is no vaccine to prevent EV-D68 infections. However, you can protect yourself from EV-D68 and other EV infections if you:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after changing diapers
 - Enterovirus is found in poop (stool). Good hand hygiene is important for anyone who comes into contact with poop.
 - **Hand sanitizer is not effective against EV**
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Use good respiratory hygiene; coughing and sneezing into a tissue or elbow and properly disposing of tissues. For more information about respiratory hygiene see the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/covercough.htm>
- Avoid kissing, hugging and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys, doorknobs and computer keyboards, especially if someone is sick.
- Stay home when feeling sick and consult your health care provider
 - Since people with asthma are at higher risk for respiratory illnesses, they should take their medicine as directed by their health care provider
- Stay up to date with immunizations, especially influenza. This can protect against other common infections and lessen the risk of having a more severe illness if you are infected with EV-D68 at the same time as influenza.