



Buncombe County Health & Human Services

Aging and Veteran's Services ~ Social Work Services
Public Assistance & Work Support Strategies ~ Public Health
Amanda Stone, MSW
Health and Human Services Director

To: Buncombe County Medical Providers
From: Dr. Jennifer Mullendore, Medical Director
Date: Monday, September 8, 2014
RE: Health alert from the Buncombe County Department of Health

Human Enterovirus-68 Guidance for NC Providers

As you may have heard on the news over the weekend, hospitals in the Midwest part of the U.S. have been seeing more children than usual with severe respiratory illness caused by human enterovirus-68 (HEV68). The media reported that several states, including NC, have contacted the CDC for assistance in investigating clusters of enterovirus. However, we spoke with the NC Division of Public Health this morning and **they are not aware of any cases or clusters of enterovirus-68 in NC** and, therefore, they have not contacted the CDC for assistance.

However, even though we don't know of any cases of HEV68 in our state or community at this time, it is very likely that this infection will spread to our area eventually. Healthcare providers should consider enterovirus-68 in young children with severe respiratory illness, and report unusual increases in cases to the health department. We are in contact with Mission regarding any suspicious cases they have been seeing and will share any information with NC DPH. DPH currently is drafting guidance on HEV68 for medical providers, but in the meantime, I have included basic information below.

Please pass the prevention information on to your patients, co-workers, family and friends.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Disease Control staff at your local health department (#250-5109 for Buncombe County).

Thanks,
Jenni

Jennifer Mullendore, MD, MSPH
Medical Director
Buncombe County Department of Health and Human Services
Office: (828) 250-6308
Jennifer.Mullendore@buncombecounty.org

-MORE-

buncombecounty.org

HHS Administration p. 828.250.5700 f. 828.250.6235 PO Box 7408 Asheville, NC 28802	Aging & Veteran's Services p. 828.250.5726 PO Box 7408 Asheville, NC 28802	Social Work Services p. 828.250.5500 f. 828.250.6235 PO Box 7408 Asheville, NC 28802	Public Assistance p. 828.250.5500 f. 828.250.6235 PO Box 7408 Asheville, NC 28802	Public Health p. 828.250.5000 f. 828.250.6235 PO Box 7407 Asheville, NC 28802
---	--	---	--	--

"Health care is vital to all of us some of the time, but public health is vital to all of us all of the time." --
Dr. C. Everett Koop, former US Surgeon General

Enterovirus-D68

- **Symptoms**
 - Mainly respiratory disease ranging from relatively mild illness to severe illness requiring intensive care and mechanical ventilation.
 - Many infections will be mild and self-limited, requiring only symptomatic treatment.
 - New-onset wheezing or asthma exacerbation can be notable symptoms.
- **Testing**
 - Most hospitals are not able to perform enterovirus typing to identify specific enterovirus.
 - Testing is **NOT** available for this virus through Mission or the health department/state lab at this time.
- **Treatment**
 - There is no specific treatment (no anti-viral) for EV-68 infections.
 - Supportive, symptomatic care is the treatment.
- **Prevention**
 - Vaccines for EV-68 infections currently are not available.
 - To help reduce the risk of infection with EV-68:
 - Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after using the toilet or changing diapers.
 - Alcohol-based hand sanitizers that contain 70%--80% alcohol may reliably inactivate this virus.
 - Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick.
 - Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
 - Stay home when feeling sick, and obtain consultation from your health care provider.

-END-