

City of Newton



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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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We are writing to provide families with information about Enterovirus D68.

Enterovirus D68 (EV68) can cause mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms that may include fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough and body and muscle aches. Some children, ill with EV68 infection, have difficulty breathing and wheezing.

Health and Human Services Department staff members are receiving regular EV 68 updates from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Massachusetts recently had its first confirmed case of EV 68. The Newton school nurses are monitoring reports of respiratory illness in the schools. Like most of the state and country, some Newton schools are seeing more respiratory illness than is typical for this time of year.

It is important for students who are sick to stay home in accordance with the Exclusion Policy for Suspected Communicable Conditions. Please keep your child at home if he or she has:

- a fever over 100°F during the past 24 hours
- **a cold in the active stages, i.e. coughing, running, sneezing**
- a sore throat and/or swollen neck glands
- an undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
- vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours

Thorough handwashing is important for the prevention of EV 68 and most other illness. Use soap and warm water, and rub hands together for 20 seconds. Other tips include:

- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid kissing, hugging and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick
- Since people with asthma are higher risk for respiratory illness, they should take medicines for asthma prescribed for them and maintain control of their asthma. They should seek care early if they are experiencing respiratory symptoms. In addition, they should take advantage of influenza vaccine since people with asthma have a difficult time with respiratory illness, and influenza is preventable.

There is no vaccine or specific treatment for people with respiratory illness caused by EV 68. Mild symptoms can be relieved by taking over-counter-medications for pain and fever. Contact your health care provider for advice when symptoms are severe. Hospitalization may be required.

In addition to EV 68, influenza or the “flu” is a contagious disease that spreads around the United States every winter, usually between October and May. One the best ways to prevent influenza is a flu vaccine, which is available to all students in grades K through 12 during the school day. If your child has already missed the clinic at his/her school, you may bring your child to a clinic at another school by contacting the school nurse in advance. Flu clinic information is available at www.newtonma.gov/flu

Additional information about EV 68 is available at www.cdc.gov or www.mass.gov/dph or by contacting your child’s school nurse.