



DUPAGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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www.dupagehealth.org

RESPIRATORY ILLNESS FACT SHEET **FOR SCHOOLS AND CHILD CARE CENTERS**

As the 2014-2015 academic year begins, we appreciate your cooperation and vigilance toward early detection and prevention of respiratory illness, particularly in school settings among students.

With the recent increase in respiratory illness reports in many parts of the nation and Illinois, alongside the upcoming cold and flu season, the DuPage County Health Department is recommending increased awareness and actions to help control and prevent the spread of illness, toward keeping our students and community safe and healthy.

As you may be aware from recent media reports, **enterovirus D68 (EV-D68)** causes respiratory illness, and the virus can be found in respiratory secretions such as saliva, nasal mucus, or sputum. **The virus likely spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches contaminated surfaces.**

Many infections are mild and resolve on their own, requiring only treatment of the symptoms. Specific symptoms include fever, difficulty breathing, and wheezing or asthma exacerbation. Some people with severe respiratory illness caused by EV-D68 may need to be hospitalized and receive intensive supportive therapy. There is no specific treatment or vaccine for EV-D68 infections; no antiviral medications are currently available for treating of EV-D68 infections.

You can help protect yourself and your child from respiratory illnesses by following these steps:

- If you or your child are experiencing cold-like symptoms with wheezing or difficulty breathing, contact your physician immediately to arrange for appropriate testing and care.
- To prevent spread of respiratory illness due to enterovirus, influenza, and other infections in the school setting, we recommend that your child stay home from school if experiencing respiratory illness symptoms (such as fever, cough, sore throat, and wheezing).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Avoid touching your 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 doorknobs and toys, especially if someone is sick.
- To protect against influenza, get your child and family vaccinated against seasonal flu. Vaccination is recommended yearly for everyone 6 months and older.

If you or your physician have any further questions, please contact the DuPage County Health Department at (630) 221-7553. More information on enterovirus D68 is available at: www.idph.state.il.us/health/infect/enterovirus_D68.htm. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

9/9/2014

Everyone, Everywhere, Everyday

In an emergency go to www.protectdupage.org and tune into WDCB 90.9 fm radio.