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**Information About Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) for Parents**

Since August of 2014, there has been a nationwide outbreak of respiratory illness caused by [Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68)](http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/about/EV-D68.html), mostly affecting children. EV-D68 appears to be the most common type of enterovirus this year and this virus may be involved in many cases of severe respiratory illnesses being seen throughout the U.S. EV-D68 is currently circulating in Rhode Island.   
   
[Enteroviruses](http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/index.html) are very common viruses and there are more than 100 known types. More than 10 million enterovirus infections occur in the United States each year, mostly in the summer and fall.  EV-D68 infections, like other enterovirus strains, generally cause mild respiratory illness (for example, fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough, minor aches and pains). Some individuals experience serious illness (including but not limited to difficulty breathing or wheezing), especially children with underlying illnesses and asthma. Most children recover from EV-D68 completely; however, serious complications may occur on rare occasions.  
   
**How It Spreads**

EV-D68 is found in respiratory droplets and illness spreads from person to person when an ill person coughs, sneezes, or touches a contaminated surface. There is no vaccine to prevent EV-D68 infections and there is no medication to treat EV-D68 infections.

**Prevention**

The best way to protect yourself and your family from EV-D68 and other respiratory illnesses (like the flu, for example) is to practice the following simple steps:

* [Wash hands](http://health.ri.gov/disease/prevention/about/handwashing/) often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
* Cover your cough or sneeze. Cough into your elbow, not hands.
* Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Avoid close contact, kissing, hugging, sharing cups, food, or eating utensils with people who are sick, or when you are sick.
* Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as doorknobs and keyboards.
* Stay home if you are sick.
* [If you have asthma, follow your asthma care plan, and call your doctor if you are sick](http://www.health.ri.gov/asthma/for/parents/).
* Get a [flu vaccine](http://health.ri.gov/flu/).

For more information, please see the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) website ([www.health.ri.gov/diseases/respiratory/?parm=141](http://www.health.ri.gov/diseases/respiratory/?parm=141)). Materials and resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for parents and caregivers are also located at the bottom of the page.

For questions or concerns, please call your school nurse at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.