

September 9, 2014

To Whom It May Concern,

As you may know, an increasing number of children in the Denver area have recently come down with a severe respiratory illness called enterovirus-D68. Denver Public Health, the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are working together to determine the extent of the illness and to prevent additional children from getting sick.

Symptoms of this illness include difficulty breathing and wheezing in some children, especially those with asthma. A fever is sometimes also present. Some children with severe illness have been hospitalized, including some needing pediatric intensive care. Most cases thus far have been among children and it seems to affect those with asthma more severely. To date, no deaths due to this illness have been reported in Colorado.

There is not a vaccine for enterovirus-D68. In order to protect staff and students against respiratory illnesses, please:

- Remind all staff and students to wash their hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid kissing, hugging and sharing cups and utensils with people who are sick.
- Frequently disinfect surfaces, such as desks, especially if someone in the class is sick.
- Encourage everyone to have current vaccinations, including the annual flu vaccine.
- Remind students with asthma to bring their inhaler to school (per your policies). Provide quick assistance to any child experiencing respiratory problems.

Because Denver children spend a large amount of time at school, Denver Public Health requests your help managing this illness. By following these simple steps, we believe we can slow the spread of this disease and prevent additional children from becoming ill.

The health of your students and staff is a priority, and we are committed to managing this illness to the best of our abilities. **If your school is seeing a large number of absences related to this illness, or if you have question for our nurses, please call us at 303-602-3614.**

Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Dr. William Burman,
Director, Denver Public Health