

**TO:** Child Care Directors

**FROM:** Gina Egenberger  
Environmental Health Educator

**DATE:** September 10, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Respiratory Illness Due to Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68)

The start of the school year typically brings with it an increase in respiratory illness. Recently there have been reports of outbreaks in many states and cases in Nebraska of a respiratory virus identified as Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68). This respiratory virus is a little more severe with typical cold-like symptoms (fever, cough and runny nose) lasting about a week. Some children also experience wheezing. Infants, children and teenagers are most likely to become ill from enterovirus and most recover with no lasting problems. Children with asthma and other health problems are at an increased risk for more severe illness from infection with EV-D68. Adults can also contract EV-D68 but tend to have milder symptoms and fewer complications. Like all viruses, EV-D68 is not treatable with antibiotics.

**How it spreads:** EV-D68 is a respiratory illness that is spread through the droplets formed when a person talks, coughs or sneezes. The droplets become airborne and can be transmitted to others nearby or when a person touches the surface where droplets have landed.

**Exclusion guidelines:** At this time we recommend you follow your center's illness exclusion policy. Children and staff with mild respiratory or cold-like symptoms do not need to be excluded. However, children with a cough accompanied with a fever, rash, or wheezing should not be in group care. Any child who cannot participate in regular activities or needs more care than can be provided in a group setting should also be excluded. Children with cold-like symptoms that experience difficulty breathing should be seen by a medical professional.

**Recommendations:**

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after wiping noses.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Teach children to cough or sneeze into tissues or their elbow/shoulder.
- Do not share cups or eating utensils.
- Disinfect doorknobs, bathrooms, and diaper changing surfaces regularly.
- Sanitize mouthed toys, dishes, drinking fountains and tables between uses.
- Ensure a minimum of 3 feet between nap mats, cots and cribs to reduce the spread of airborne infections such as Enterovirus D68.
- Follow your center's illness exclusion policy.
- Keep an Absence Due to Illness log so you can track communicable illness in your facility.

If you have questions about Enterovirus D68, please contact the Health Department's Communicable Disease Program at 402-441-8053.

For assistance or questions on illness exclusion policies, call 402-441-6220 or email [childcare@lincoln.ne.gov](mailto:childcare@lincoln.ne.gov). Sample child care policies and forms can be found at [www.lincoln.ne.gov](http://www.lincoln.ne.gov)  
keyword: child care

