

Enterovirus D68

Last updated: **February 2024**

Enteroviruses are very common viruses. There are more than 100 different types of non-polio enteroviruses that cause illness. These viruses are related to some common cold viruses.

Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) is a rare non-polio enterovirus that can cause mild (for example, runny nose, cough, sneezing) to severe (for example, difficulty breathing) respiratory illness or neurological complications (for example, weakness in the arms or legs). EV-D68 can spread from person to person through coughing, sneezing, close contact with an infected person, or by touching contaminated surfaces.

There is no specific treatment or vaccine for EV-D68. Most people will get better on their own without any treatment. The risk of severe illness is low for most British Columbians. However, people with respiratory illness, especially children with a history of asthma or wheezing may sometimes experience severe breathing difficulty during infections with respiratory viruses. In the event that symptoms worsen, especially difficulty breathing, medical care should be sought immediately. Parents of children with asthma should make sure their children regularly take their prescribed asthma medication (for example, puffers or inhalers) and make sure their illness is well controlled.

Enteroviruses such as EV-D68 are most common in the summer and fall months. To protect yourself and your family against enteroviruses such as EV-D68, make sure to:

- Wash your hands. For more information on hand washing, see [HealthLinkBC File #85 Hand washing: Help stop the spread of germs](#). If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer
- Cough and sneeze into your arm, not your hand
- Keep your hands away from your face
- Keep common surface areas clean and disinfected
- Stay home if you are sick
- Seek medical care right away if you are having trouble breathing, especially if you have a history of asthma or other lung conditions
- Make sure your immunizations are up to date. There is no vaccine for EV-D68, but ensuring your other immunizations are up to date will help keep you healthy and your immune system strong. For more information on immunizations, see our [B.C. Immunization Schedules](#) web page
- Eat healthy foods and be physically active to help keep your immune system strong. For more information on healthy eating, visit our [Healthy Eating](#) web page

For health care workers

For a situation update on EV-D68 for B.C. clinicians and public health practitioners, visit the BC Centre for Disease Control [Emerging Respiratory Virus Updates](#) web page.

Useful websites

BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC)

The BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) is an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority. They provide provincial and national leadership in public health through surveillance, detection, prevention and consultation. For more information, view [Enterovirus D68](#).

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) is responsible for promoting health, preventing and controlling chronic and infectious diseases, and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies. For information about Enterovirus D68, including causes, symptoms and treatment, visit [Non-polio enterovirus infections](#).

The information provided in the Enterovirus D68 Health Feature has been adapted from [BCCDC: Enterovirus D68 Overview](#) accessed February 11, 2024. For current updates from the BC Centre for Disease Control, see [Emerging Respiratory Viruses](#).

For more HealthLinkBC File topics, visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca/more/resources/healthlink-bc-files or your local public health unit. For non-emergency health information and advice in B.C. visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca or call **8-1-1** (toll-free). For the deaf and hard of hearing, call **7-1-1**. Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.