



NEWS RELEASE

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Enterovirus D-68 Confirmed in a North Dakota Resident

BISMARCK, N.D.—A confirmed case of Enterovirus D-68 (EV-D68) has been identified in a child from Stutsman County, according to the North Dakota Department of Health. She was hospitalized with a respiratory illness that caused difficulty breathing, cough and wheezing. The patient is no longer hospitalized and recovered at home.

“This is the first confirmed EV-D68 case that has been reported in North Dakota,” said Jill Baber, epidemiologist with the North Dakota Department of Health. “However, enteroviruses are not reportable to the North Dakota Department of Health, so the number of cases being reported are not necessarily representative of the number of EV-D68 cases in the state.”

Enteroviruses are common respiratory viruses that affect an estimated 10 to 15 million people in the United States each year, most often in the summer and fall. While EV-D68 is less common than other enteroviruses, it is not new to the United States. Infected individuals have mild to severe respiratory illness that may include cough, trouble breathing and wheezing. The virus is most likely spread through coughs, sneezes or contact with surfaces contaminated with saliva or mucus. Parents, as always, should seek medical attention if their child has difficulty breathing and should treat other influenza-type symptoms the same as they normally would.

According to Baber, “Not all respiratory illnesses occurring now are due to EV-D68. There are many different viruses that can cause respiratory illness, including influenza.” The public can protect themselves against EV-D68 and other respiratory viruses by frequently washing hands with soap and water, avoiding close contact with sick people and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.

For more information, contact Jill Baber, North Dakota Department of Health, at 701.328.2378.

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