

Respiratory Illness Parent Letter

Recently in the news there has been concern over a respiratory virus that has been spreading from the west affecting mostly children. The virus is called Enterovirus D68. It was first reported in 1962. Most children are presenting with symptoms of mild to severe respiratory symptoms. These include common cold symptoms, cough, wheezing, fever, rash and difficulty breathing. Children who have asthma or other breathing issues may be more susceptible for severe symptoms.

According to the CDC, the virus can be found in respiratory secretions such as saliva, nasal mucus or sputum. It likely spreads from person to person when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or touches contaminated surfaces.

Children with mild symptoms will need to let the virus run its course, treating just their symptoms as you would a common cold. Children with more severe symptoms may require hospitalization and even require treatment in an intensive care unit. Currently there are no known antiviral medications or vaccines available to treat Enterovirus D68. If your child's symptoms worsen contact your child's physician.

The majority of these cases are very mild. As always we cannot stress the importance of hand washing. Please remind your child to wash their hands often with soap and water. They should wash their hands before eating, after playing outside, after blowing their nose, after using the bathroom. Children should avoid touching the T-zone, the area between their eyes, nose and mouth. Children should remember to cough into their elbow. If they cough into their hands, they should wash their hands. Children should be reminded to avoid kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick. Stay home if you are ill. Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact you school nurse.

Thank you.

Vernon School Nurses