

Connecting Point

A MID MICHIGAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



October 2014

Enterovirus D68

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Visit www.mmdhd.org for more information on agency programs, services and health issues.



The United States is currently experiencing a nationwide outbreak of Enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) associated with severe respiratory disease. Michigan has seen an increase in severe respiratory illness in children across the state, and the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) is working with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), local health departments and hospitals to monitor the increase. As of October 1st, the CDC reported 500 cases of EV-D68 across the country and 25 cases in Michigan.

Enteroviruses are common, with more than 100 known types. It is estimated that 10 to 15 million enterovirus infections occur in the United States each year. The CDC reports that this year, EV-D68 is occurring at a higher rate than reported in previous years.

According to the CDC, EV-D68 symptoms can range from mild to severe respiratory illness. Mild symptoms may include fever, runny nose, sneezing, cough and body aches. Severe symptoms may also include wheezing and difficulty breathing. Young children with asthma appear to be at increased risk for severe complications and are encouraged to be vigilant in taking their asthma controlling medications.

Enteroviruses are spread through close contact with an infected person or by touching objects or surfaces that are contaminated with the virus and then touching the mouth, nose or eyes. There is no specific treatment for EV-D68, but those whose cases are severe often require hospitalization. *(continued on page 2)*

Sexually-Transmitted Infections (STI) Prevention

The most commonly contracted STI's nationally, as well as in Michigan, are Chlamydia and Gonorrhea. This is true for all age groups, including teens. While teen pregnancy is on the decline locally, STI's are on the rise in Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties. As a result, MMDHD is focusing efforts on educating youth and parents to increase teen's knowledge and change risky behaviors.

| Reported STI 5-year Case Averages, All Ages | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|-------------------|--|--|-------------------|
| | Chlamydia 2003-07 average cases | Chlamydia 2008-12 average cases | Percent Change | Gonorrhea 2003-07 average cases | Gonorrhea 2008-12 average cases | Percent Change |
| Clinton Co. | 93 | 120 | +29% | 18 | 13 | -28% |
| Gratiot Co. | 74 | 77 | +04% | 10 | 10 | 0% |
| Montcalm Co. | 89 | 137 | +54% | 19 | 17 | -10% |
| Michigan | 38,400 | 48,808 | +27% | 16,589 | 14,641 | -12% |

MMDHD staff is available to speak with school staff, provide education on STI and teen pregnancy prevention, and provide information on services available through the agency's Family Planning clinics. For more information, contact Andrea Tabor, RN, BSN, MPH, Director of Community Health and Education, at 989-831-3639 or at atabor@mmdhd.org.

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To protect yourself from enterovirus infection, follow these precautions:

- Wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
- Avoid kissing, hugging or sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick
- Disinfect frequently-touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, especially if someone is sick
- If you are sick, stay home

For more information about EV-D68, visit www.cdc.gov or contact your local MMDHD branch office.

Community Health Workers (CHW)

Pathways to Better Health is a federally-funded community HUB project that strives to improve health outcomes for at-risk individuals and reduce health care costs. CHW's provide peer support services to help individuals navigate the health care system and receive much needed assistance. Working with the Ingham Health Plan Corporation, the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) hired a CHW for Clinton County, who now has a full caseload of clients, demonstrating the need for such services. MMDHD has recently hired two CHW's to provide case management services for at-risk residents in Montcalm and Gratiot Counties.

According to The American Public Health Association, community health workers:

- Are front-line employees who have a close understanding of the community served
- Serve as liaisons between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery
- Build individual and community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through outreach, community education, informal counseling, social support and advocacy.

For more information, contact Andrea Tabor, RN, MPH, Community Health and Education Director at atabor@mmdhd.org

Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program

The VFC Program helps provide vaccines to children whose parents or guardians may not be able to afford them. VFC helps ensure that all children have a better chance of getting their recommended vaccinations on schedule.

There is no charge for vaccines given by a VFC provider to eligible children. However, there can be other costs with the vaccination:

- Doctors can charge a set (standard) fee to administer each shot. If the family cannot afford the fee per shot, the fee must be excused. A VFC-eligible child cannot be refused a vaccination due to their parent's or guardian's inability to pay for shot administration.
- There can be a fee for the office visit.
- There can be fees for non-vaccine services, such as an eye exam or blood test.

Physicians' offices can help eligible children by contacting MMDHD. Staff is available to help provider offices with free education on immunizations, CDC vaccine storage and handling requirements, and all VFC program resources from the Michigan Department of Community Health.

For more information about the VFC program, contact: Hazel Hall at hhall@mmdhd.org or Lisa Mikesell at lmikesell@mmdhd.org.

Do1thing

The do1thing program is designed to make the job of emergency preparedness easier for individuals, families and organizations. Each month is devoted to a single preparedness activity. For October, do1thing focuses on "power." We all count on electricity for heat, food and medical needs. Power outages often follow other emergencies such as tornados or winter storms. Do1thing provides helpful hints on acquiring generators, power outage safety, and preparing for what happens before and after the power goes out. For more information, visit www.do1thing.com.

For more information about these and other Health Department programs, contact:

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