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Enterovirus-D68 (EV-D68) Respiratory Illness and Unexplained Acute Neurological Illness in New Hampshire

Key Points and Recommendations:

1. Enterovirus-D68 is widely circulating in the U.S. and New Hampshire, mostly causing respiratory infections in children and adolescents.
2. An ongoing national investigation into the cause of acute neurological illness (acute limb weakness with abnormal MRI spinal cord findings) has not yet found definitive association with EV-D68.
3. NH DPHS is still offering testing for enteroviruses on patients who have a severe unexplained respiratory illness requiring hospitalization, or clusters of severe respiratory infection, but DPHS will no longer cover the cost of testing on respiratory specimens from non-hospitalized patients with mild respiratory illness.
4. To discuss submission of specimens for enterovirus testing or EV-D68 typing, please call NH DPHS at 603-271-4496.
5. Clusters of severe unexplained severe respiratory illness should continue to be reported to the NH DPHS at 603-271-4496.
6. Patients meeting the CDC case definition for acute neurological illness with focal limb weakness and abnormal spinal cord findings on MRI should continue to be reported to NH DPHS at 603-271-4496.

Epidemiology:

Nationally, more than 800 cases of Enterovirus-D68 (EV-D68) respiratory infections have been reported from most U.S. states. New Hampshire has identified 42 specimens from patients with enterovirus infection. Of these 42 specimens positive for enteroviruses, 35 were respiratory specimens, and 7 were CSF specimens. Twelve of these enterovirus isolates were confirmed as EV-D68; testing is still pending in some specimens. All of these EV-D68 isolates were from respiratory specimens and were from patients 16 years of age or younger. All hospitalized patients have since been discharged home, and there have been no associated deaths. DPHS is updating case counts on our public website on Wednesdays and Fridays. For the most up to date numbers, please visit our website at: <http://www.dhhs.state.nh.us/dphs/cdcs/enterovirus-d68.htm>

Regarding the national investigation into cases of acute neurological illness with focal limb weakness or paralysis of unclear etiology, there still has been no definitive identification of a causative etiology, and there is no definite association with EV-D68; the investigation is ongoing. Two New Hampshire residents have been reported to DPHS that meet the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's case definition for this neurological syndrome which includes acute focal limb weakness and spinal cord lesions on MRI. To date, testing has not confirmed either Enterovirus or EV-D68 infection in these New Hampshire residents.

Given that we know EV-D68 is circulating in New Hampshire and around the country, we are scaling back testing of specimens at the New Hampshire Public Health Laboratories for enteroviruses to include those patients who have a severe unexplained respiratory illness requiring hospitalization, or clusters of severe respiratory infection. DPHS will no longer cover the cost of testing on respiratory specimens from non-hospitalized patients with mild respiratory illness. We will continue to send respiratory specimens positive for enteroviruses to the New York Public Health Laboratory for EV-D68 typing. We will continue to offer enterovirus testing and EV-D68 typing on CSF specimens to help try and determine spectrum of illness related to EV-D68. To submit a specimen for enterovirus testing or EV-D68 typing, please contact NH

DPHS, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 to discuss the case prior to submitting a specimen.

Further background information can be found on the NH Health Alert Messages' page at:
<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dphs/cdcs/alerts/han.htm>

Further information on the national EV-D68 investigation can be found at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/hcp/EV-D68-hcp.html>

Further information on the national investigation into acute neurological illness with focal limb weakness of unknown etiology can be found at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncird/investigation/viral/sep2014.html>

For any questions regarding the contents of this message, please contact NH DHHS, DPHS, Bureau of Infectious Disease Control at 603-271-4496 (after hours 1-800-852-3345 ext.5300).

To change your contact information in the NH Health Alert Network, contact Denise Krol at 603-271-4596 or email Denise.Krol@dhhs.state.nh.us

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Attachments: None

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