

Memo of Infection Prevention and Control Department to Everyone

Date: September 9 2014

Re: Enterovirus

A new Enterovirus strain (D68) is causing clusters of illness in 12 states, leading to an increase in hospitalizations in children with serious complication from the illness.

Viruses that belong to the Enterovirus genus, include polioviruses, coxsackie viruses, echoviruses, and enteroviruses. They can be found in the nose and throat secretions (saliva, sputum, or nasal mucus), fluid in blisters, and stool of infected persons for weeks after symptoms resolve. Enteroviruses are known for causing a common childhood illness called “hand, foot and mouth disease”. However, on occasion certain strains cause a more serious illness.

They are spread through direct contact with the infectious viruses, or indirect contact when infected persons touch objects and surfaces that are then touched by others. The most susceptible individuals are children, usually those under 5, and sometimes adults. There is no treatment, only symptom management.

Although there are no cases identified in Ontario, it is important that we remain diligent in our infection prevention and control measures in order to prevent the spread of any respiratory illness to staff or to patients.

Our routine screening procedures at both campuses will allow us to identify and use the correct additional precautions on patients presenting with a respiratory illness, which may be Enterovirus, and many other viral infections (such as influenza, and the common cold).

When a patient with new or worse shortness of breath or cough with any one of the following: sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion or chest congestion, with or without fever, they require Droplet / Contact Precautions.