



Communications and Community Relations
1115 North El Paso Street, Room 204, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
www.d11.org (719) 520-2005 Fax: (719) 577-4546

September 8, 2014

TO: All Schools, Departments, Colorado Springs School District 11

FROM: Mary Crimmins, Interim Public Information Officer

RE: Virus EV-D68

As you know, recent reports in the Denver area and in other cities across the country have indicated an increase in pediatric patients with severe respiratory illness and asthma. Initial testing at the Centers for Disease Control indicates this may be caused by human enterovirus 68. At this time, we are aware of only a few confirmed cases in Colorado Springs.

The virus can start as just a cold. Symptoms include:

- Coughing, runny nose
- Difficulty breathing
- Possible rash
- Fever
- Wheezing

The most concerning thing about this virus is how quickly a child can go from feeling sick to not being able to breathe. Health officials say there is not a great deal that can be done beyond taking commonsense steps to reduce the risk, such as:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom or changing diapers (for elementary students, have them sing the "Happy Birthday" song three times while washing their hands);
- If you sneeze or cough, do so into your elbow and turn away from those around you;
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are regularly touched by different people, such as toys, doorknobs, keyboards, and desk surfaces;
- Avoid shaking hands AND avoid fist bumps; many children wipe their nose on the back of their hands;
- Stay home if you feel unwell.

When in doubt, families should refer to their pediatrician or health care specialist. The District is proactively stepping up their efforts to ensure disinfectant and hand sanitizer is readily available to all school sites.

Please alert your staff and edit this letter for your communities. At this time, we do not recommend a robo-call with all of this information; instead, you could use the robo-call feature to alert parents that important information is coming home with their students regarding Colorado Springs School District 11's continued efforts to ensure the safety of all students.

Sincerely,

Mary Crimmins
Interim Public Information Officer
Colorado Springs School District 11