

Human Parainfluenza Virus (HPIV) in Childcare and Schools

What is Parainfluenza Virus?

- A virus that causes respiratory symptoms
- Most common in fall, spring, and early summer

What are the symptoms?

- Runny nose, congestion, fever, and cough most commonly
- Very young infants can also show:
 - Irritability
 - Poor feeding
 - Turn blue with cough or brief periods of no breathing
- Wheezing and asthma attacks in children who already have asthma
- Children with weakened immune systems have a greater difficulty when sick with this virus
- HPIV may lead to croup, bronchitis, bronchiolitis, or pneumonia

How is Parainfluenza Virus spread?

- Through contact with large droplets that form when a child talks, coughs, or sneezes
- These droplets can land on or be rubbed into the eyes, nose or mouth
- Contact with unclean objects (such as toys or desks) by children with HPIV
- Can live on surfaces for many hours and 30 or more minutes on your hands
- Before symptoms develop the virus can infect others

How can you control it?

- Wash your hands often
- Teach children to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue when sneezing or coughing
- Clean commonly touched surfaces and toys frequently

Recommendations for Childcare Providers and Schools

- There is no reason to exclude children from group settings unless the child has a fever or difficulty breathing or is unable to participate without compromising the health and safety of other children in the group
- HPIV commonly infects infants and young children
- Human Parainfluenza Virus (HPIV) is not the same as influenza, therefore the influenza vaccine is not effective against HPIV. Handwashing and disinfecting are the best preventative measures against HPIV.



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