

Human Parainfluenza Virus (HPIV)

Symptoms:

- Runny nose
- Decreased appetite
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Sneezing
- Fever
- Ear ache (sinus pain)
- Rapid breathing
- Wheezing

Epidemiology:

There are four different Human Parainfluenza Viruses, which peak at different times of the year. HPIV is most common in fall, spring, and early summer. HPIV can cause upper respiratory infections and lower respiratory tract infections. The incubation period for HPIV is 2 to 7 days and mode of transmission is direct contact, large droplets, and fomites. HPIV commonly affects daycares and schools but can also cause severe illness and outbreaks in long-term care facilities and nursing homes.

Laboratory Testing:

Since HPIV symptoms are similar to other respiratory illnesses, such as influenza, respiratory testing is recommended to confirm the etiology. The West Virginia Office of Laboratory Services (OLS) offers free testing for outbreaks and for respiratory surveillance for sentinel providers/hospitals. Few clinical labs may also provide testing for HPIV. Contact your local health department if you suspect you have an outbreak of HPIV.

Infection Control: (long-term care and assisted living facilities)

- Standard precautions should be observed for all healthcare encounters.
- In addition to standard precautions, implement contact precautions for the duration of illness as stated in the “2007 Guidelines for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Setting” guide.
- Encourage residents, staff and visitors to use general prevention measures listed below.
- Restrict ill staff from patient care. Restrict movement of staff between units.
- Recommend restriction of ill visitors; consider restriction of all visitors.
- Limit or defer new admissions.

Prevention:

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Wiping of hard surfaces with soap and water or disinfectant.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

