

Increase in suspected cases of Acute Flaccid Myelitis in Washington State since September 2016

Current situation in Washington

- A cluster of suspected acute flaccid myelitis (AFM) has been reported among Washington residents.
- As of November 4th, 2016, eight cases have been confirmed as AFM and one has been ruled out by CDC.
- All cases are among **children between 3 and 14 years of age** who presented with acute paralysis of one or more limbs. All had a febrile prodrome 1 to 2 weeks prior to presentation with symptoms of AFM.
- The earliest onset of limb weakness was on September 14th and the most recent on October 27th.
- The cases are residents of King County (3), Pierce County (1), Franklin County (2), Snohomish County (1) and Whatcom County (2).

Actions requested

- **Consider AFM in the differential** for individuals of any age with sudden weakness in one or more arms or legs, along with loss of muscle tone and decreased or absent reflexes.
- **Report suspected cases of AFM promptly** to Jefferson County Public Health, 360-385-9400.
- **Complete the AFM patient summary form** when reporting patients:
 - (<http://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/downloads/patient-summary-form.pdf>)
- **Collect specimens** from patients suspected of having AFM **as early as possible in the course of illness**
- Notify JCPH if you are aware of patients of any age that presented to your facility or practice in 2016 and fit the case definition for AFM (must have CSF results or MRI report available).

Background

From January 1st to September 30th, 2016, a total of 89 people in 33 states across the country have been confirmed to have AFM. This represents an increase over the previous 2 years (reporting only started in 2014). Most of these have been in children. No etiology for the infections has been established although a potential association with enterovirus D68 has been reported. AFM is also known to be associated with other neurotropic enteroviruses, adenovirus, herpes viruses, arboviruses including West Nile virus, and other etiologies. Non-infectious causes have not been ruled out.

Resources

WA DOH AFM web page:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ForPublicHealthandHealthcareProviders/NotifiableConditions/AFM>

WA DOH AFM Investigation web page:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/AFMInvestigation>

CDC AFM surveillance web page:

<http://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/afm-surveillance.html>

For questions, please call our Communicable Disease staff at 360-385-9400.