

Taiwan reports 1st severe enterovirus case of the year, parents and educational institutions should stay vigilant.

Today (January 6), Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported 1st severe enterovirus D68 case in Taiwan. The patient, a 4-year-old girl in southern Taiwan, accrued a mild cough and runny nose symptoms on January 5 and did not seek medical treatment. On the 7th, she developed symptoms such as fever, shortness of breath, and abdominal pain and went to the doctor. She went to the doctor again next day because the symptoms were not relieved.

After examination, exacerbation of asthma and myocarditis was reported, and she was transferred to the intensive care unit for continuous treatment. Testing confirmed she was infected with enterovirus D68. The hospital reported that enterovirus infection was complicated by severe illness. In the end, the patient was back to stable and was discharged from the hospital. She has now returned to normal life.

According to the monitoring data of the CDC, till February 6, 2023, last week (January 29, 2023, to February 4, 2023), a total of 1,330 visits from enterovirus outpatient and emergency departments in Taiwan, which has increased to 42.6% than the previous week (933). Mainly due to the resumption of outpatient visits after the Spring Festival holiday, but it was still lower than the second to third weeks before the Spring Festival (1824 and 2032 visits), and the recent contract laboratory monitoring still detected enteroviruses, showing that enterovirus is continuously affecting the community.

Schools will open next week, and student activities are also back on campus, which may increase the risk of epidemic transmission. In 2022, a total of 3 confirmed cases of enterovirus infection complicated by severe disease in Taiwan, 2 cases were infected with Coxsackievirus A2 and 1 case was infected with enterovirus D68, of which 1 died (D68), and 1 case was D68 this year.

The CDC reminded people that enterovirus D68 is transmitted through fecal-oral, droplet, or contact. Common symptoms are fever, runny nose, and cough, which are not the same as herpetic angina or hand-foot-mouth disease from typical enteroviruses. A small number of patients may develop complications such as pneumonia, encephalitis, and limb paralysis.

Currently, there is no vaccine or drug available for prevention and treatment. The most effective prevention methods are good hand hygiene and cough etiquette and reducing access to crowded public places, implementing measures such as taking a rest at home when sick; if a child at home is found to have limb weakness and paralysis, or drowsiness,

unconsciousness, poor vitality, weakness in hands and feet, muscle twitching (unexplained fright or sudden muscle contraction), persistent vomiting and shortness of breath or rapid heartbeat and other severe precursor symptoms, please go to a hospital for medical treatment as soon as possible. For more details, please visit CDC's website (<https://www.cdc.gov.tw>), or call the toll-free epidemic prevention hotline 1922 (or 0800-001922).