

# Metapneumovirus (hMPV)

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## What is it?

- Human Metapneumovirus (hMPV) is a newly identified respiratory virus.
- The signs and symptoms are similar to those caused by other respiratory viruses.

### Mild symptoms

- fever
- runny nose
- cough

### Severe symptoms

- high fever
- extreme breathing problems
- coughing, wheezing, grunting
- can result in bronchiolitis and pneumonia

- Infections with other respiratory viruses, such as RSV and influenza can happen at the same time as an hMPV infection.

## How is it spread?

- It is spread through droplets from the mouth and nose when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- It is also spread by direct contact with discharges from the nose or throat of an infected person.
- Infection is common during infancy and early childhood.
- hMPV can also cause disease in elderly adults with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or those with weak immune systems. Cough, fever and breathing problems are the most common symptoms in the elderly.

## Is there treatment for it?

- For mild hMPV, no specific treatment is needed other than the treatment of symptoms. For example, acetaminophen can be given to reduce a fever. **Do not give ASA (aspirin) to children.**
- For those with severe hMPV a hospital stay may be needed to treat breathing problems.
- There are some treatments that may help those who are at high risk of developing severe hMPV.
- Talk with your family doctor to see what treatment is right for you.

## What can be done to prevent the spread of it?

- Clean hands well and often.
- Do not get too close to people who are coughing or sneezing.
- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your sleeve – not your hand.
- Clean and disinfect shared toys and equipment.
- Try to stay away from crowds and people with colds, if your child has a weak immune system.
- Do not visit family members or visitors in a hospital or health care facility if you have a cold or fever.

## For more information

Merck Manuals Online Medical Library

<http://www.merck.com/mmpe/sec14/ch188/ch188f.html?qt=hmpv&alt=sh>

It is expected that health care providers clean their hands before they touch you. Don't be shy, please remind them.

