

HUMAN METAPNEUMOVIRUS



hMPV is a virus that can cause infections in your lungs and make it difficult to breathe. People of all ages can get hMPV, but children under 5 years of age, older adults, or those with a compromised immune system are at higher risk of serious complications. You can get sick with hMPV more than once. In Wisconsin, it is most common in the late winter and spring.

How is it spread?

- ▶ People with hMPV can spread it to others when they cough or sneeze. The virus is found in droplets from the throat and nose. When someone coughs or sneezes, people around them may breathe in those droplets.
- ▶ The virus can also spread when someone touches an object with the virus on it. If that person then uses their hands to touch their face, mouth, or eyes, the virus can make them sick.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Symptoms usually start 3–6 days after breathing in hMPV droplets.

Mild symptoms:

- ▶ Fever
- ▶ Sore throat
- ▶ Runny or stuffy nose
- ▶ Cough

Severe symptoms:

- ▶ High fever
- ▶ Aggravation of asthma
- ▶ Severe cough (wheezing)
- ▶ Hoarseness
- ▶ Difficulty breathing
- ▶ Pneumonia

What are the treatment options?

- ▶ There is no vaccine against hMPV.
- ▶ Neither antibiotics or antiviral medications work against hMPV. Most people with hMPV will get better on their own without any medicine. However, there are some steps you can take that will lessen symptoms, including taking pain relievers and antihistamines, getting extra rest, drinking fluids, and receiving breathing treatments (as recommended by your doctor).

How can it be prevented?

- ▶ Wash your hands often with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer if you do not have soap and water.
- ▶ Use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze, and then throw the tissue away. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
- ▶ Do not share anything you put in your mouth, such as drinking cups, straws, or eating utensils.
- ▶ Stay home from work or school if you are feeling sick so you do not spread hMVP to others.

