

ADENOVIRUS



What is Adenovirus?

Adenoviruses are a group of viruses that most commonly affects the respiratory tract causing from mild cold-like symptoms to pneumonia or bronchiolitis (infants). Depending on virus type, the organism may also cause other illnesses such as gastroenteritis, conjunctivitis, bladder infection and rash illness.

How is it spread?

Adenoviruses are spread from person to person through poor hand washing after an infected person has a bowel movement (fecal-oral) or by breathing in airborne droplets when someone sneezes or coughs, or by touching hands and articles freshly soiled by the nose, throat, or eye discharges of an infected person. Sometimes infection can occur from inadequately chlorinated swimming pools or small lakes.

What are the signs and symptoms?

The signs and symptoms of adenovirus infection may vary and include headache, fever, runny-nose, sore throat, red-watery eyes, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

What is the incubation period and how long is it communicable?

The symptoms usually start 4-5 days after coming in contact with the virus, may appear as early as two days or as late as 14 days. The sick individual may infect someone else as long as they are symptomatic and even up to one week after symptoms stop.

How can adenovirus infection be prevented?

The best prevention is to frequently wash your hands vigorously with soap and water before eating and after using the restroom, handling diapers (use gloves), and cleaning after/caring for a symptomatic individual. Also proper disposal of diapers and disinfection of changing tables will help stop the spread of the virus.

Adults and children should be encouraged to sneeze or cough in a tissue or their elbows and dispose of used tissue into a waste basket. It is recommended to use spray bottles to apply the disinfectant (1 part bleach to 9 part cool water; prepared daily) to contaminated surfaces such toilets, sinks, floors, tables, water fountains or any areas where a sick individual has been.

What should I do about it?

If the fever lasts more than a few days, the symptoms are getting worse or last more than a week, the child has problems breathing or is under three (3) months of age or shows signs of dehydration (tired, lack of energy, dry mouth, or sunken eyes), please seek medical care. Patients with poor immune systems are especially at risk of severe and life-threatening infections.

Children and sensitive workers can NOT attend school/childcare and will need to be symptom free for 24 hours before being readmitted. The SRCHD Epidemiology Department may change exclusion rules at any time. Clusters of two or more persons are considered a reportable disease to the Santa Rosa County Health Department (SRCHD).

For more information, please contact the SRCHD's Epidemiology Program at 850-983-5200.