

## Let's Talk About...

# Human Metapneumovirus (hMPV)

## What is human metapneumovirus?

Human metapneumovirus (met-ah-new-mow vie-rus) is a virus that causes respiratory infections. It can cause a common cold, pneumonia, or bronchitis.

## What does human metapneumovirus look like?

Most children with this virus have a mild cold. For example, they might have a cough, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, and fever.

Some children are sicker and can have some of these problems:

- Wheezing
- Very fast breathing
- Trouble breathing
- Vomiting
- High fever
- Diarrhea
- Severe cough

Human metapneumovirus is more serious in children who are one year old or younger and in elderly people who can't fight infections.

## How do people get infected with human metapneumovirus?

Children and adults can get infected with this virus by close contact with another infected person. They can also spread the disease by sharing cups or toys.

## How can I prevent my child from getting human metapneumovirus?

Here are some ways to protect your child from a human metapneumovirus infection:

- Wash your hands and your child's hands often with soap and water.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when you can't wash your hands.
- Keep your child away from people who are sick.
- Keep your child away from large gatherings during the winter season.

## How does the doctor know my child has human metapneumovirus?

Your child's doctor will get a small amount of secretions (snot) from your child's nose and send the sample to be tested for the virus.

## What can I do to help my child?

It is important for your child to get enough liquids. Encourage your child to drink often. You can give your child medicine to treat a fever (Tylenol® or ibuprofen). Some children who are sicker may need oxygen.

## What happens if my child is admitted to the hospital?

If admitted to the hospital, your child may need an IV (small tube that goes into the vein) to help get enough liquids. Your child may also need oxygen, usually with a nasal cannula (small tube under your child's nose that blows a little oxygen into each nostril). Your child may have to have snot sucked out of their nose. This is done with a small tube (catheter) put into the nose every once in a while. This clears the nose and can help your child breathe better.

## Why is my child in droplet precautions?

Healthcare workers have close contact with your child and can be exposed to the virus. They will wear masks, gloves and gowns when they come in your child's room. Most children only need droplet precautions for a few days. Your child's doctor or nurse will let you know when the precautions can be stopped.

## When can my child go home?

Your child can go home once they:

- Drink enough liquids
- Sleep without oxygen

- Only need a bulb suction for snot and do not need a catheter
- Meet other requirements from their doctor

## What if I have more questions?

If you have more questions about human metapneumovirus, contact your child's healthcare provider.

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