



Increased illness in our communities

There are many different types of viruses that cause respiratory infections. During the month of March Ferry, Pend Oreille, and Stevens County communities have seen an increased rate of influenza activity with a recent spike in Human Parainfluenza 3 Virus, which is a virus commonly seen in spring and early summer.

Human Parainfluenza 3 Virus (HPIV-3) commonly causes upper and lower respiratory illnesses in infants, young children, older adults and people with weakened immune systems, but anyone can get infected. Most people will show symptoms within 2-7 days of exposure.

HPIV-3 is typically a mild illness and does not need medical care or antiviral drugs. Someone with mild symptoms should stay home and avoid contact with other people except if seeking medical care. Common symptoms include fever, runny nose, cough, sore throat, sneezing, wheezing, ear pain, irritability and decreased appetite. Severe lower respiratory illness symptoms may include croup, bronchitis, bronchiolitis, and pneumonia.

With mild illness medical attention may not be needed, however, if someone is in a high-risk group, or are very sick or worried about their illness, they should contact their healthcare provider. High risk groups include young children, people 65 and older, pregnant woman and people with certain medical conditions. Anyone with emergency warning signs of flu sickness, should go to the emergency room. Warning signs include but are not limited to: trouble breathing, bluish lips or face, chest pain, dehydration, seizures, not urinating, severe weakness, not alert or interacting when awake and worsening of chronic medical conditions.

There is no vaccine to protect against HPIV-3 infection. To reduce risk of exposure to HPIV:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

If you are sick with HPIV illness:

- Stay home while you are sick, CDC recommends staying home 24 hours after fever breaks
- Avoid close contact with others
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Keep objects and surfaces clean and disinfected

There is no specific treatment for HPIV illness. Most will recover on their own. Over the counter medications can be used for pain and fever. Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration and rest. With severe illness please contact medical provider for proper management of care. Additional information can be found [CDC's Human Parainfluenza Viruses \(HPIVs\)](#).