



Hawaii State Department of Health

Disease Investigation Branch

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Adenovirus

What is the adenovirus?

The adenovirus is a contagious virus that can cause respiratory illnesses ranging from mild to severe symptoms. Some adenoviruses cause viral gastroenteritis (VGE). Adenovirus primarily affects young children.

How do you get it?

Adenoviruses are spread to others in the air through coughing and sneezing. It may also be spread by touching something with the virus on it and then touching your mouth or nose.

What are the symptoms of adenovirus?

Symptoms of the adenovirus may include fever and sore throat.

More serious symptoms may include pneumonia, croup, and bronchitis.

Some adenoviruses can cause conjunctivitis and diarrhea.

When do symptoms start?

Symptoms usually begin 3 to 10 days after exposure to the virus.

For how long is a person with the adenovirus contagious?

The virus can be shed from the body for a long period of time. So it is possible to spread the adenovirus even after a person recovers and does not show any symptoms.

What is the treatment for the adenovirus?

There is no specific treatment for adenovirus infection.

Most cases can be treated with plenty of rest and drinking lots of liquids.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Advil) can be given for fever and pain to help relieve common cold symptoms. Aspirin should never be given to children or teenagers with flu-like symptoms.

Should a person with the adenovirus stay away from work or school?

Yes. Because it is very contagious, it is important for children to stay away from others until they are feeling better.

How can you keep from getting the adenovirus?

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When sick, stay away from others to protect them from getting sick also.

Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.

Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. If you cannot use soap and water, use an alcohol based hand sanitizer.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth to prevent the spread of the virus.

For more information, see the CDC's website at <https://www.cdc.gov/adenovirus/hcp/index.html>