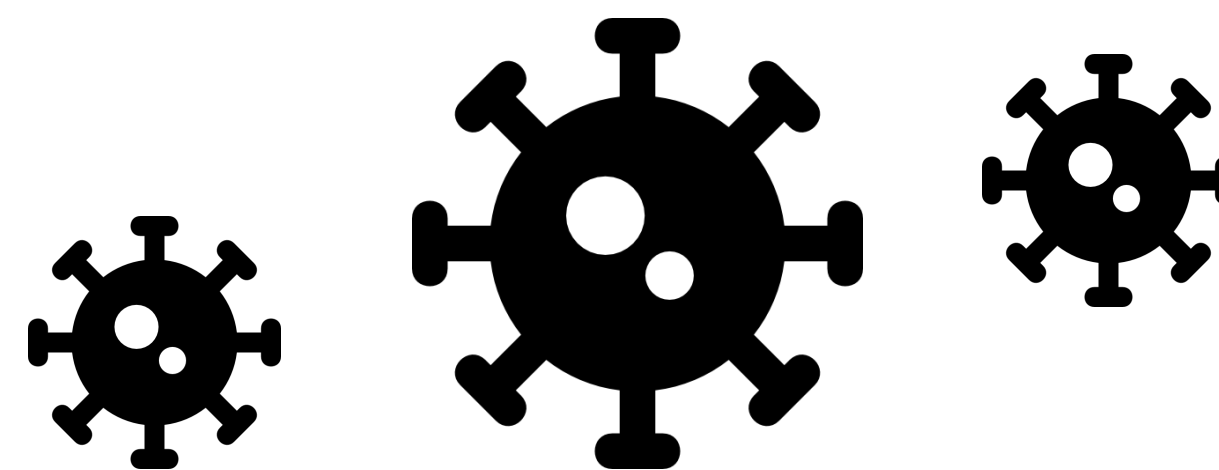


Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM)

Fact Sheet



Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) is a condition that affects the nervous system, specifically the area of the spinal cord called gray matter. Cases of AFM are mostly in young children.



AFM is sometimes called a polio-like condition, but the exact cause of AFM is unknown. Viruses likely play a role. Most people with AFM recover.

Signs and Symptoms



Limb Weakness



Facial Droop/
Weakness



Difficulty Moving
the Eyes/Drooping
Eyelids

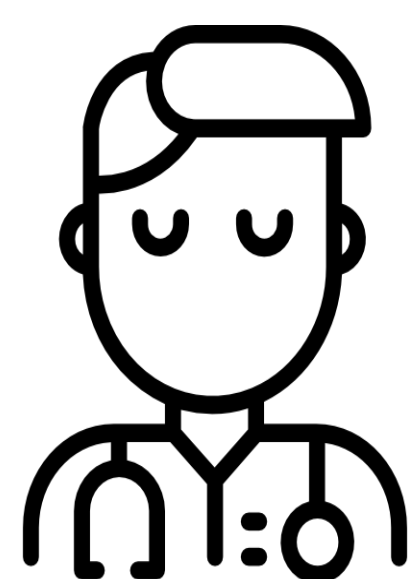


Difficulty
Swallowing

Sudden onset of arm or leg weakness and loss of muscle tone and reflexes is the most common symptom. Some people have:

- facial droop or weakness
- difficulty moving eyes
- drooping eyelids
- difficulty swallowing
- slurred speech
- pain in the arms or legs

In rare cases, people may be unable to pee and have numbness or tingling. Severe cases of AFM can lead to respiratory failure, serious neurologic complications, and death.



Seek medical care right away if you or your child develops symptoms of AFM. AFM is diagnosed based on lab tests and pictures of the spinal cord. There is no specific treatment.

Prevent AFM

Since the cause of AFM is unknown, there is no specific action to take to prevent AFM. However, most patients had a mild respiratory illness or fever before developing AFM.

You can decrease your risk of getting viral infections by:



Stay up-to-date on vaccinations



Washing hands often with soap and water



Avoiding close contact with people who are sick

You can decrease the risk of spreading viral infections by:



Cleaning and disinfecting surfaces, like toys and doorknobs

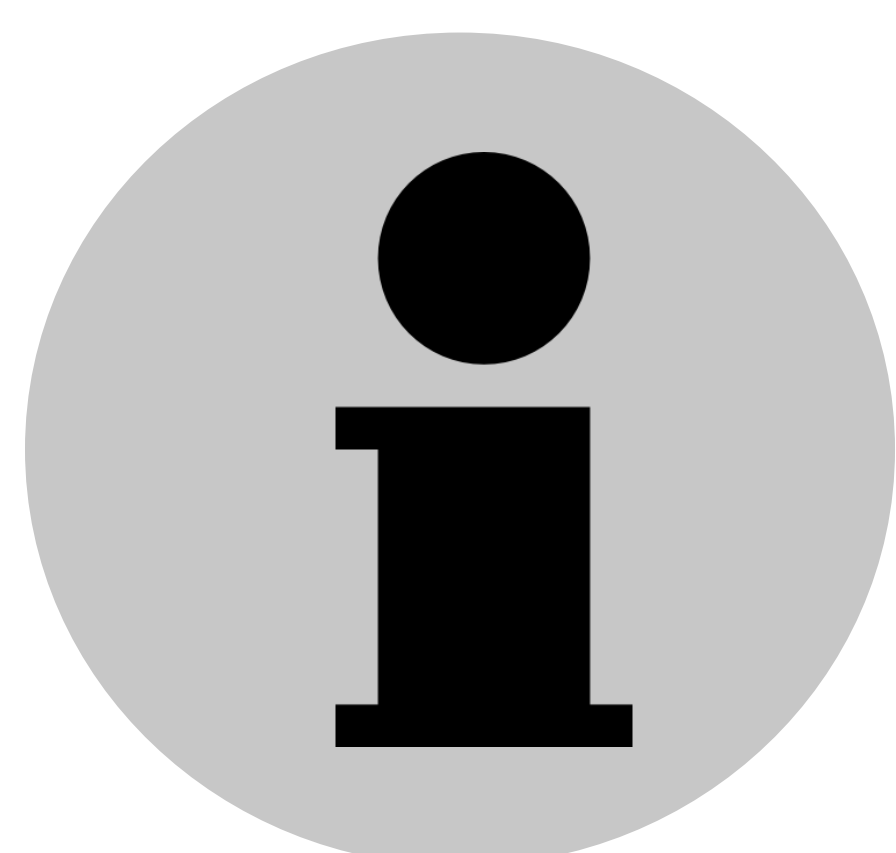


Covering cough and sneezes with a tissue or elbow



Keeping sick children at home

For More Information, Visit:



1. www.maine.gov/dhhs/afm
2. www.cdc.gov/afm

You can also call Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.