

Childhood virus kills 70 in Vietnam

July 29 2011

(AP) -- A health official says a surging outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease in Vietnam has killed 70 people so far this year and infected more than 23,000, mostly children under 5.

Nguyen Van Binh, head of the Ministry of Health's Department of [Preventive Medicine](#), was quoted by Thanh Nien newspaper as saying most of the cases have been reported in the country's south.

Enterovirus 71, or EV-71, is the dominant strain circulating in Vietnam. It can result in a more serious form of the common childhood disease leading to paralysis, [brain swelling](#) or death.

This year's outbreak is a sharp uptick from recent years. Since 2008, about 10,000 to 15,000 cases were reported per year with about 20 to 30 children dying annually.

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