

Asthmatic first to die from enterovirus in Canada

October 17 2014

A young asthmatic has become the first Canadian to die in an international outbreak of the respiratory enterovirus D68, officials announced Friday.

Public health officials in British Columbia told AFP the man, reportedly in his early 20s, had suffered from [severe asthma](#).

After becoming infected with EV-D68 his health took a sudden turn for the worse, and he died earlier in the week, they said.

A spike in cases among patients in the United States has affected 538 people, most of them children, in 43 states, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Seven deaths were associated with the virus in the United States this year. Previously there had been one death in Japan in 2010 and one in the Philippines in 2008.

In Canada, only a handful of cases have so far been reported.

Enterovirus D68 is not new. It was first discovered in 1962, but has remained fairly uncommon, experts say.

Viruses in this family typically circulate in the late summer to early fall, before [flu season](#) begins in earnest. There is no vaccine to prevent EV-D68.

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