

## **EV-D68, acute flaccid myelitis outbreaks smaller than expected**

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(HealthDay)—The outbreaks of enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) and acute

flaccid myelitis (AMF) that were expected in 2020 did not occur, according to a study published in the March 10 issue of *Science Translational Medicine*.

Sang Woo Park, from Princeton University in New Jersey, and colleagues characterized the epidemiological dynamics of EV-D68 using surveillance data from the BioFire Syndromic Trends epidemiology network in the United States from January 2014 to September 2019.

The researchers identified a latitudinal gradient in the mean timing of EV-D68 cases, which was likely driven by climate. There was also a strong spatiotemporal association of EV-D68 with AFM. Based on mathematical modeling, recent dominant biennial cycles of EV-D68 dynamics were suggested not to be stable. Under normal conditions, it was predicted that a major EV-D68 outbreak and AFM outbreak would have been possible in 2020. The sizes of EV-D68 and AFM outbreaks in 2020 were likely reduced by nonpharmaceutical intervention efforts due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Though currently uncommon, this syndrome has been increasing in frequency with each successive [outbreak](#) since 2014, making it critically important to better understand the patterns and drivers behind it," Park said in a statement. "Fortunately, we saw very little EV-D68 circulation in 2020 and few cases of AFM compared to what was expected, but that makes it even more important to be as prepared as possible for what could be coming in 2021 or beyond."

Two authors disclosed financial ties to bioMérieux Inc. or its subsidiaries.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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