



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official
MSDH Medical Advisory**

MESSAGE ID: MSHAN-20180828-00140-ADV (Medical Advisory)
RECIPIENTS: Infectious Diseases and Neurologists - Statewide
DATE: Tuesday, August 28, 2018
SUBJECT: Mississippi State Department of Health Requests Prompt Reporting of Cases of Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM)

Suspected Cases of AFM?

- A patient who presents with acute flaccid weakness of one or more limbs.
- No laboratory or MRI results are needed to alert public health officials about a case, and a diagnosis is not needed.
- West Nile virus, certain enteroviruses, and other infectious etiologies known to be associated with AFM.
- The sooner the suspected case is reported, the likelihood of finding a cause is increased.

Reporting:

- If you believe your patient has symptoms of AFM, such as acute flaccid weakness, contact you're the Mississippi State Department of Health Office of Epidemiology as soon as possible at 6015767725.
- CDC is requesting assistance to identify possible etiologies of AFM.
- Submission of biological specimens for additional diagnostic testing may be requested for submission to CDC.

Dear Colleagues,

Acute flaccid myelitis (AFM) is an illness characterized by acute onset of flaccid limb weakness and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) showing lesions in the gray matter of the spinal cord. AFM has been under investigation by health departments and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the past 4 years. Surveillance has shown us that AFM cases generally peak in the months of September and October. A biennial pattern has been observed, with the majority of cases reported in 2014 and 2016, and smaller numbers reported in 2015 and 2017. If this pattern continues, we should expect to see an increase in AFM cases in 2018. We are sending this letter to encourage you to be aware of the symptoms of AFM, and to provide some resources to help with the identification and reporting of suspected AFM cases and specimen collection.



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AFM appears to start with a prodromal respiratory or gastrointestinal illness about 1 week before limb weakness onset. Pain in the neck or back often directly precedes weakness in one or more limbs, and cranial nerve findings such as slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, and eyelid or facial droop may occur. On exam, the weak limb(s) displays poor tone and diminished reflexes. Cerebrospinal fluid may show a lymphocytic pleocytosis and elevated protein. MRI findings in AFM cases include lesions in the central, or gray matter, of the spinal cord.

Since AFM is a relatively new condition, we need information on all patients to help us better understand the spectrum of illness, and all possible causes, risk factors, and outcomes for AFM. We ask you to send all information about patients that meet the clinical criterion for AFM (sudden onset of flaccid limb weakness) to your health department. Information should be sent on patients who meet the clinical criterion regardless of any laboratory results or MRI findings. Note there is no age restriction for reporting suspected cases. The case definition includes people of all ages to allow us to collect information on the full spectrum of the condition in both children and adults.

For more information about the case definition for AFM, please see <https://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/hcp/case-definition.html>.

Regards,

Paul Byers
State Epidemiologist



Alerting Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: Mississippi State Department of Health
Alerting Program: MSDH Medical Advisory
Message Identifier: MSHAN-20180828-00140-ADV
Program (HAN) Type: Medical Advisory
Status (Type): Actual ()
Message Type: Alert
Reference: MSHAN-00138
Severity: Unknown
Acknowledgement: No
Sensitive: Not Sensitive
Message Expiration: Undetermined
Urgency: Undetermined
Delivery Time: 600 minutes

Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

Alerting Program: The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

Message Identifier: A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).

Program (HAN) Type: Categories of Health Alert Messages.

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Health Info Service: Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.

Status (Type):

Actual:	Communication or alert refers to a live event
Exercise:	Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
Test:	Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded



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Message Type:

Alert: Indicates an original Alert
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

Reference: For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

Severity:

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Acknowledgement: Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

Sensitive:

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Expiration: Undetermined.

Urgency: Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

Delivery Time: Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).