

# New Polio-Like Disease Seems to Target Children: What Is It and How Do You Prevent It?

Ivana Popovic December 06, 2018



The most severe instance of AFM is when the child experiences difficulty in breathing because the muscle groups that are essential for breathing become weak.

**An illness has recently been found to be on the rise. This illness has been observed to be more prevalent in children than in adults.**

([Newswire.net](#) -- December 6, 2018) -- An illness has recently been found to be on the rise. This illness has been observed to be more prevalent in children than in adults. About two months ago, the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have reported to have confirmed a total of 62 cases of acute flaccid myelitis (AFM). Acute Flaccid Myelitis seems to cause symptoms that are similar to that of polio and it also affects the spinal cord.

Around 22 states have confirmed a total of 127 cases of acute flaccid myelitis, which is bound to spark a degree of worry given that this is classified as a rare disease. Nonetheless, it's going to be of utmost importance to know what exactly is AFM and how do you prevent it.

Read on, dear readers. A bit of information may very well spell whether or not your child becomes a victim. So, let's get to it:

## What Exactly Is AFM?

Acute Flaccid Myelitis is a rare condition that affects the nervous system. The condition targets the gray matter in the spinal cord and it causes the muscles, as well as the reflexes programmed into them, to become weak. The National Institutes of Health classify AFM as "rare" (when a disease or disorder affects fewer than 200,000 Americans at any given time).

Some symptoms of AFM include:

- Loss of muscle tone
- Limb weakness and pain
- Hindered eye movement
- Slurred speech
- Inability to urinate
- Drooping eyelids
- Facial weakness

The most severe instance of AFM is when the child experiences difficulty in breathing because the muscle groups that are essential for breathing become weak. This may require the use of a ventilator in order for the child to be able to breathe.

AFM may even trigger other neurological complications that will often lead to death. It is imperative that if your child exhibits any of these symptoms, you need to consult a pediatrician like one of the professionals at [UT Pediatrics](#). You may also want to read on the few ways on how you can treat AFM.

## What Causes AFM?

The CDC suspects that AFM is caused by a virus, particularly, the [EV-D68 virus](#) that spread throughout the nation in

2014. This virus, however, remains unnamed. As of writing, there is no known cause of AFM. The CDC also suspects that AFM may also be caused by environmental toxins or may even be a genetic disorder.

### **What Treatments Are There for AFM?**

People who are diagnosed with AFM have limited treatment options. Like other neurological diseases, the only way to currently treat AFM is for the patient to undergo [occupational therapy](#) or physical therapy.

It's been reported that some patients have been able to recover rapidly while other remained paralyzed and they required close monitoring for any signs of neurological deterioration.

The chances of developing AFM is one in a million, according to the CDC.

Source: <http://newswire.net/newsroom/blog-post/00106332-new-polio-like-disease-seems-to-target-children-what-is-it-and-how-do-you-prevent-it.html>