

Poliovirus Infection, Including Poliomyelitis

Agent: Poliovirus

Mode of Transmission: Person-to-person transmission through ingestion of contaminated food or direct contact with fecal material from infected people.

Signs/Symptoms: Up to 90% of all polio infections are asymptomatic. Ten percent will develop into a non-specific syndrome with fever, malaise, headache, nausea, and vomiting. Flaccid paralysis occurs in less than 1% of poliovirus infections.

Prevention: Vaccine should be administered beginning at 2 months of age. Four doses of trivalent, inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV) are recommended with the last dose administered prior to kindergarten entry and after the fourth birthday.

Other Important Information: Polio eradication programs have led to the elimination of the disease in four of the six World Health Organization (WHO) regions and 80% of the world's people now live in polio-free areas. Polio incidence has dropped more than 99 percent since the launch of global polio eradication efforts in 1988. Poliovirus transmission has never been interrupted in only three countries, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Pakistan. Until poliovirus transmission is interrupted in these endemic countries, all countries remain at risk of importation of polio, especially in the "wild poliovirus importation belt" stretching from west Africa to central Africa and the Horn of Africa. According to WHO, there were 416 cases of polio worldwide in 2013, up from 223 reported cases in 2012. This resurgence can be attributed to import cases reported in Cameroon, Somalia, Syria, Ethiopia, and Kenya. Somalia reported the most cases in 2013 (183) followed by Pakistan and Nigeria. For the second year in a row, India did not report any cases of polio. In 2011, Virginia's reporting requirements were changed to require reporting of any poliovirus infection, not only poliomyelitis.

No poliovirus infections were reported in Virginia in 2013. The last reported case of poliomyelitis in Virginia occurred in 1978.