



## What is ParaInfluenza?

Parainfluenza refers to a group of viruses called human parainfluenza viruses (HPIVs). There are four viruses in this group. Each one causes different symptoms and illnesses. All forms of HPIV cause an infection in either the upper or lower respiratory area of a person’s body. This virus is seen more often in infants, young children, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems, but overall, anyone can get infected. The most predominant time for people to get HPIV infections is in the spring, summer, and/or fall. After you get infected, it takes about 2 to 7 days before you develop symptoms.

Common symptoms of upper respiratory illness may include

- cough
- fever
- runny nose

Common symptoms of lower respiratory illness may include

- pneumonia
- bronchitis
- croup

Other symptoms of HPIV illness may include:

- sneezing                      decreased appetite
- wheezing                      irritability
- sore throat                      ear pain

If your symptoms are severe or do not improve, you should seek medical attention. The four different types of the HPIV include:

- HPIV-1 and HPIV-2 both cause croup.
- HPIV-3 is more often associated with bronchitis, and pneumonia.
- HPIV-4 is recognized less often but may cause mild to severe respiratory illnesses.

Human parainfluenza viruses (HPIVs) usually spread from an infected person to others through

- the air by coughing and sneezing
- close personal contact, shaking hands or touching the person
- touching objects or surfaces that have HPIVs on them then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes

Currently, there is no vaccine to protect you against infection caused by HPIV. You may be able to reduce your risk of HPIV and other respiratory viral infections by

- washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- avoiding close contact with people who are sick