

## Information on Acute Flaccid Myelitis Public Information

### What is Acute Flaccid Myelitis?

Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) is a syndrome characterized by rapid onset of weakness in one or more limbs and distinct abnormalities of the spinal cord gray matter on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). AFM is a subset of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP). AFP is the acute onset of weakness, absent signs of spasticity, or other signs indicating a central nervous system disorder. AFP includes AFM, Guillan-Barre syndrome (GBS), toxic neuropathy, and muscle disorders.

During the summer and fall of 2014, an apparent increase in reports of AFM occurring in the United States was identified. Louisiana made AFM a reportable condition and reported their first AFM case in 2014.

### What causes AFM?

Understanding the incidence and epidemiology of AFM and its public health impact in the United States is significantly limited. While AFM is most commonly attributable to poliovirus or West Nile virus and other flaviviruses; other viruses, including non-polio enteroviruses, may rarely cause AFM.

### What are the symptoms of AFM?

Clinical manifestations of AFM include:

- acute focal limb weakness
- spinal cord lesion largely restricted to gray matter and spanning one or more spinal segments
- CSF pleocytosis (CSF protein may or may not be elevated)
- history of respiratory or febrile illness preceding the neurological symptoms

### How to report suspected cases of AFM

Healthcare providers are urged to report any cases suspected of AFM. These cases can be reported directly to the Louisiana Office of Public Health Infectious Disease Epidemiology Section using any of the methods below:

Phone: (504) 568-8313  
1-800-256-2748  
Fax: (504) 568-8290

### Helpful links

Patient Summary Form:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/downloads/patient-summary-form.pdf>

AFM Standardized Case Definition:  
<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.cste.org/resource/resmgr/2015PS/2015PSFinal/15-ID-01.pdf>

CDC Considerations for Clinical Management of Patients:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/downloads/acute-flaccid-myelitis.pdf>