

CDC Says Mysterious Hepatitis Outbreak Has Left Over 100 Kids Sick and 5 Dead

May 07, 2022

COM
PLEX



Image via Getty/Kevin C. Cox

U.S. health officials are investigating a mysterious hepatitis outbreak that has left more than 100 children sick and at least five dead.

[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) announced the probe Friday, saying there were now 109 known cases of unusual pediatric hepatitis across 24 states and Puerto Rico. The agency said some the cases date back to late October, and all affected children were 10 or

younger. [CNN](#) reports about 14 percent of those children needed transplants after experiencing severe liver inflammation. Approximately 90 percent of infected kids required hospitalization.

Dr. Jay Butler, the CDC's deputy director for infectious diseases, said adenovirus was detected in more than half of the children, but researchers have yet to determine the cause of the illness. Adenovirus is a common virus that can result in a variety of infections as well as mild flu-like symptoms. Experts say the virus is typically linked to severe hepatitis, especially among children with no existing health conditions.

"It's important to note that this is an evolving situation, and we are casting a wide net to help broaden our understanding," Butler said, adding that the cases were rare. "... We really are casting a broad net and keeping an open mind in terms of whether the adenovirus data may reflect an innocent bystander or whether there may be cofactors that are making the adenovirus infections manifest in a way that's not been commonly seen before."

Experts are urging parents to look out for symptoms linked to hepatitis, including stomach pain, loss of appetite, light-colored stools, vomiting, diarrhea, dark urine, as well as yellowing of their skin and eyes (jaundice).

The World Health Organization said there were 300 probable cases of pediatric hepatitis in 20 countries. U.S. states that have reported the illness include California, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Texas, and Washington.