

## Provider Guidance



Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) is a rare syndrome characterized by rapid onset of flaccid weakness in one or more limbs with abnormalities of the spinal cord or brain grey matter on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI).

### Timing is Key for AFM



Recognize AFM

Collect specimens & get a MRI

Report to the department

Diagnosis & medical management

### Recognizing AFM

- AFM tends to occur in **late summer or early fall**
- Respiratory symptoms or fever consistent with a viral infection occurs less than a week before onset of limb weakness
- Hospitalize patient immediately upon suspicion of AFM
- **Don't wait for CDC's case classification to diagnosis or treat**

### Symptoms

- Arm or leg weakness
- Difficulty moving the eyes
- Difficulty with swallowing
- Pain in arms, legs, neck or back
- Loss of muscle tone
- Loss of reflexes
- Facial droop or weakness
- Slurred speech

### Collect specimens & get a MRI

- Specimens should be collected as early as possible in the course of illness, **preferably on the day of limb weakness onset**
  - Specimens need to be sent to a State Public Health Laboratory, contact your county health department (CHD) to coordinate
  - Order an MRI of the entire spine and brain with and without contrast
- 3 Tesla scanners are preferred and axial/sagittal images are the most helpful**



CSF



Serum



Stool



NP swab

Additional information concerning specimen collection can be found in the [Job Aid for Clinicians](#)

### Report to health department

Please contact your CHD to report a suspected case of AFM at

[\*\*FloridaHealth.gov/CHDEpiContact\*\*](https://www.floridahealth.gov/CHDEpiContact)

If the CHD cannot be reached, contact the state health department at 850-245-4401

#### Items that need to be submitted

- Admission and discharge notes
- Neurology and infectious disease consult notes
- MRI report
- MRI images
- Vaccination history
- Laboratory test results
- **Patient summary form**

### Diagnosis & medical management

**There are no proven ways to treat or prevent AFM**

Providers should expedite neurology and infectious disease consults to discuss management and treatment

#### Long-term follow-up

The state health department is conducting long-term follow-ups on cases to better understand AFM outcomes. It consists of a 9 question survey and medical records. Data will be shared with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Follow-ups will occur at **60 days, 6 months, and 1 year** after limb weakness onset.

The AFM Physician Consult and Support Portal is available to help with patient diagnosis and medical management contact them at

[\*\*wearesrna.org/living-with-myelitis/resources/afm-physician-support-portal\*\*](https://wearesrna.org/living-with-myelitis/resources/afm-physician-support-portal)