# Extracted Content from https://ndc.services.cdc.gov/case-definitions/acute-flaccid-myelitis-2018/

Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) 2018 Case Definition | CDC  
Skip directly to site content  
Skip directly to search  
An official website of the United States government  
Here's how you know  
Official websites use .gov  
A .gov website belongs to an official government organization in the United States.  
Secure .gov websites use HTTPS  
A  
lock  
(  
) or  
https://  
means you've safely connected to the .gov website. Share sensitive information only on official, secure websites.  
National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS)  
Explore Topics  
Search  
Search  
Clear Input  
For Everyone  
About About National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System  
What is Case Surveillance?  
Case Surveillance Modernization  
Infectious Disease Tables  
Non-Infectious Disease Data  
Technical Resource Center  
Case Surveillance in Action  
Contact Us  
View all  
Related Topics:  
NDC Application  
View All  
search  
close search  
search  
National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS)  
Menu  
Close  
search  
For Everyone  
About About National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System  
What is Case Surveillance?  
Case Surveillance Modernization  
Infectious Disease Tables  
Non-Infectious Disease Data  
Technical Resource Center  
Case Surveillance in Action  
Contact Us  
View All  
Related Topics  
NDC Application  
View All  
National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS)  
About About National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System  
What is Case Surveillance?  
Case Surveillance Modernization  
Infectious Disease Tables  
Non-Infectious Disease Data  
Technical Resource Center  
Case Surveillance in Action  
Contact Us  
View All  
April 16, 2021  
Case Definitions  
Message Mapping Guides  
Supporting Documents for Implementation  
Event Codes & Other Surveillance Resources  
Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM)  
2018 Case Definition  
Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM)  
2018 Case Definition  
NOTE:  
A surveillance case definition is a set of uniform criteria used to define a disease for public health surveillance. Surveillance case definitions enable public health officials to classify and count cases consistently across reporting jurisdictions. Surveillance case definitions are not intended to be used by healthcare providers for making a clinical diagnosis or determining how to meet an individual patient’s health needs.  
CSTE Position Statement(s)  
17-ID-01  
Background  
Acute flaccid myelitis (AFM) is a syndrome characterized by rapid onset of flaccid weakness in one or more limbs and distinct abnormalities of the spinal cord gray matter on magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Beginning in the summer and fall of 2014, an apparent increase in reports of AFM occurred in the United States, and standardized surveillance was established in 2015 to monitor this illness and attempt to estimate the baseline incidence. Data collected since the establishment of standardized surveillance helped with the identification of another increase in reports nationally during 2016 and has provided additional valuable information on the clinical presentation to help better characterize the clinical features, epidemiology, and short-term outcomes of cases of AFM.  
Clinical Criteria  
An illness with onset of acute flaccid limb weakness  
Laboratory Criteria For Diagnosis  
Confirmatory Laboratory Evidence: a magnetic resonance image (MRI) showing spinal cord lesion largely restricted to gray matter  
\*  
†  
and spanning one or more vertebral segments  
Supportive Laboratory Evidence: cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) with pleocytosis (white blood cell count >5 cells/mm  
3  
)  
Case Classification  
Probable  
Clinically compatible case  
AND  
Supportive laboratory evidence: CSF showing pleocytosis (white blood cell count >5 cells / mm  
3  
)  
Confirmed  
Clinically compatible case  
AND  
Confirmatory laboratory evidence: MRI showing spinal cord lesion largely restricted to gray matter  
\*✝︎  
and spanning one or more spinal segments  
Comments  
To provide consistency in case classification, review of case information and assignment of final case classification for all suspected AFM cases will be done by experts in national AFM surveillance. This is similar to the review required for final classification of paralytic polio cases (1).  
\* Spinal cord lesions may not be present on initial MRI; a negative or normal MRI performed within the first 72 hours after onset of limb weakness does not rule out AFM.  
†  
Terms in the spinal cord MRI report such as “affecting mostly gray matter,” “affecting the anterior horn or anterior horn cells,” “affecting the central cord,” “anterior myelitis,” or “poliomyelitis” would all be consistent with this terminology.  
References  
CSTE. National Surveillance for Paralytic Poliomyelitis and Nonparalytic Poliovirus Infection (09-ID-53).  
Related Case Definition(s)  
Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) | 2022 Case Definition  
Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) | 2020 Interim Case Definition, Approved October 9, 2020  
Acute Flaccid Myelitis (AFM) | 2020 Case Definition  
Back to Top  
Sources  
Print  
Share  
Facebook  
LinkedIn  
Twitter  
Syndicate  
Content Source:  
Case Definitions  
Message Mapping Guides  
Supporting Documents for Implementation  
Event Codes & Other Surveillance Resources  
National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System (NNDSS)  
NNDSS receives and shares case data from state, local, and territorial health departments to help public health monitor, control, and prevent serious diseases.  
View All  
About About National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System  
What is Case Surveillance?  
Case Surveillance Modernization  
Infectious Disease Tables  
Non-Infectious Disease Data  
Technical Resource Center  
Case Surveillance in Action  
Contact Us  
View All  
Sign up for Email Updates  
Contact CDC  
Organization  
Policies  
Web Policies  
Languages  
Languages  
Español  
Language Assistance  
Archive  
CDC Archive  
Public Health Publications  
Contact Us  
About CDC  
Organization  
Policies  
Web Policies  
Languages  
Languages  
Español  
Language Assistance  
Archive  
CDC Archive  
Public Health Publications  
HHS.gov  
USA.gov