

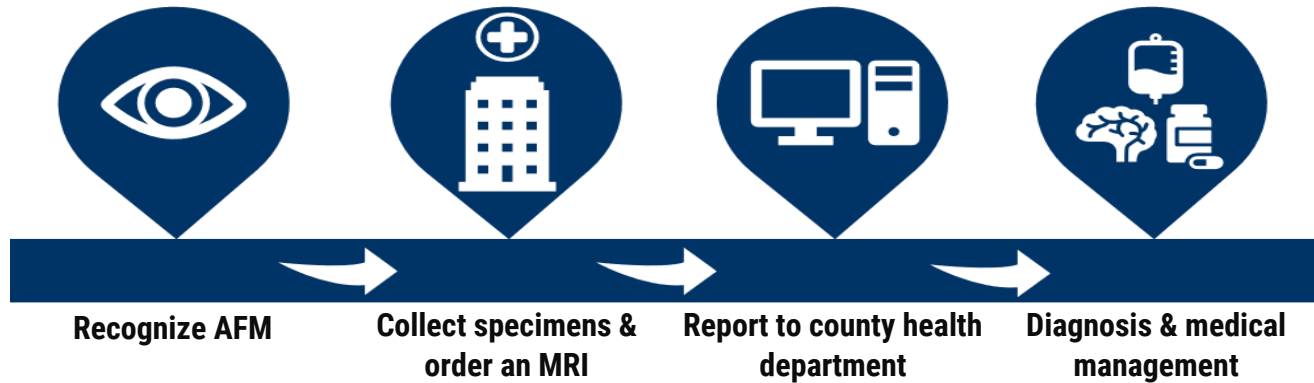
Acute Flaccid Myelitis

April 2022

Provider guidance



Acute flaccid myelitis (AFM) is an uncommon but life-threatening neurologic condition that affects mostly children and presents with the rapid onset of weakness in one or more limbs



Recognizing AFM

- AFM tends to occur in **late summer or early fall**
- The majority of patients with AFM have upper respiratory symptoms or fever in the days or weeks preceding the onset of weakness
- Patients should be hospitalized immediately upon suspicion of AFM
- **Do not wait for Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) case classification to diagnose 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 & order an 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 the Bureau of Public Health Laboratories; 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 most helpful



CSF



Serum



Stool



NP swab

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

Report to county 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

Long-term follow-up is conducted on cases to better understand AFM outcomes; it consists of a 9-question survey and medical records. Data will be shared with the **CDC**

Follow-up will occur at **60 days** after limb weakness onset

The AFM Physician Consult and Support Portal is available to help with patient diagnosis and medical management. Contact them at wwwearsna.org/living-with-myelitis/resources/afm-physician-support-portal