



COUNTY OF YOLO

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GI Illness Outbreak; Residents Advised to Take Precautions to Limit Spread

(Woodland, CA) – The Yolo County Health & Human Services Agency is investigating a gastrointestinal illness (GI) outbreak throughout the county. The most common cause of widespread GI illness is Norovirus, more commonly called the stomach flu. The organism causing the present outbreak is unknown at this time but Public Health is working to identify the organism.

Numerous schools have reported high numbers of students and staff presenting with symptoms consistent with a GI illness. “Public Health is working closely with school officials to investigate the outbreak,” said Yolo County Public Health Officer Ron Chapman, MD, MPH. Common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramps, and can last for 1-3 days. Dr. Chapman advises: individuals with symptoms stay home and not return to work or school until 48 hours after symptoms have resolved; practice good hand-washing, particularly after using the bathroom and before eating; and thoroughly clean surfaces following CDC guidelines: www.cdc.gov/features/norovirus.

Here is a summary of recommendations that are particularly helpful if you have children:

- If you or your child develops these symptoms, keep them at home until they are no longer vomiting, experiencing diarrhea and/or fever and nausea. They must be free of symptoms for 48 hours.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after contact with vomit or stool. Hand sanitizer can be used if no water is around, however, it is not a replacement for using soap and water.
- Clean all areas that have come in contact with diarrhea or vomit. Use a bleach-based household cleaner as directed on the product label. If no such cleaning product is available, use a solution made with 5 tablespoons to 1.5 cups of household bleach per 1 gallon of water. Be sure to leave the cleaning solution or product on the surface for 10-20 minutes. Rinse the area with clean water after disinfecting.
- Notify the school and tell them your child’s symptoms.
- Consult with your doctor for any questions and let them know that other students at your child’s school have these symptoms. The doctor may want to take a sample of your child’s stool.
- Fluid is lost in diarrhea and vomiting. Make sure your child is able to drink fluids. If your child becomes weak or is unable to drink fluids, seek immediate medical care.

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