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1/5/2012 16:04	Butte County Public Health	Freer, Charlotte	District	1/1



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Health Advisory

To: Butte County School Districts, School Nurses and Childcare Providers
From: Mark Lundberg, M.D., M.P.H. (signed original on file)
Date: January 5, 2012
Re: Increase in Gastrointestinal Illness Seen in Butte County

This Health Advisory is being issued to inform school officials and childcare providers about increased incidence of gastrointestinal (GI) illness in Butte County. Several cases of GI illness have been laboratory confirmed as norovirus disease.

What is norovirus?

- Norovirus is a highly contagious illness caused by a virus. It is commonly referred to as "stomach flu", but is not related to the influenza virus.
- The most common symptoms are vomiting, diarrhea and stomach pain.
- Most people get better within 1-2 days.
- Norovirus can be serious for some people, especially the very young, the elderly, and people with other illnesses.
- Norovirus is found in the stool and vomit of infected people. People can become infected by:
 - Eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus,
 - Touching contaminated surfaces or objects, and then petting their hand in their mouth,
 - Having direct contact with an infected person.

How can norovirus be prevented?

- Wash your hands with soap and water, especially after using the toilet or changing diapers, and before eating or preparing food.
- Do not prepare food while infected, or for 48 hours after symptoms go away.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces with a bleach-based household cleaner as directed on the product label.
- Wash contaminated clothing or linens immediately. Launder with detergent at the maximum cycle length and machine dry.
- Persons who are ill should stay home at least 24 – 48 hours after symptoms go away.

Reporting

Schools and childcares should report suspected outbreaks of norovirus to the Health Department as soon as possible.

Notify Butte County Public Health Department if:

- 3 or more children in one classroom, or group of students (3 or more), have onset of vomiting and/or diarrhea on the same day, or
- Absences due to vomiting and/or diarrhea are double the expected amount over normal for that particular time of year

To talk with a Communicable Disease, in Oroville call 538-7581 or in Chico call 891-2732

Categories of urgency levels:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action

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