Battling the Stomach Bug

*Food Safety is Your Friend*

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Battling the Stomach Bug: Food Safety is Your Friend

Leading cause of outbreaks of diarrhea and vomiting in the U.S.

#1

- 19 to 21 million illnesses
- 56,000 to 71,000 hospitalizations
- 570 to 800 deaths
OBJECTIVES

• Understand the severe impact that an outbreak of norovirus can have in a school setting.
• Describe practices to prevent and control foodborne norovirus outbreaks.
• Identify norovirus prevention and control resources for school nutrition professionals.
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Less than 4% of all foodborne outbreaks reported to the CDC are in school settings.

When foodborne outbreaks do occur in schools illnesses are most often associated with norovirus.

History

• The Norovirus was originally named the Norwalk agent after Norwalk, Ohio, USA
• Outbreak of acute gastroenteritis occurred among children at Bronson Elementary School in November, 1968
• The name was shortened to Norovirus after being identified in a number of outbreaks on cruise ships
Norovirus Symptoms

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal Cramps
- Starts 1 to 2 days after exposure
- Duration is usually 1 to 3 days
TRANSMISSION
How do you get norovirus?

• Eating food or drinking liquids contaminated with norovirus
• Touching objects or surfaces contaminated with norovirus and then touching hands to mouth.
**How contagious is norovirus?**

Just a very small amount - as few as 18 viral particles - of norovirus on your food or your hands can make you sick.

In fact, the amount of virus particles that fit on the head of a pin would be enough to infect more than 1,000 people!

Source: Journal of Medical Virology, August, 2008
What makes norovirus different?

• Highly contagious
• Easily spread
• Hard to kill
• Small amount
PREVENTION
3 Key Safe Food Practices

1. Wash hands
2. Avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods
3. Stay home when sick
WASH YOUR HANDS!

About Hand Sanitizer: Use if soap and water are not available
Proper Hand Washing is Critical for Preventing Transmission and Infection

• Especially after each toilet visit
• When changing diapers especially in child care settings.
• Before eating or preparing food
Avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods

- Use single use disposable gloves
- Use utensils
Stay Home When Sick

Employees Should Report the Following Symptoms To Their Manager

• Vomiting
• Diarrhea
• Jaundice
• Sore throat with fever
• Infected cuts and wounds on hands, wrists, or exposed portions of the arms
Stay Home When Sick

- Food Service employees are required to report symptoms of diarrhea and/or vomiting to their manager.
- Managers should take action by excluding or restricting sick workers.
- Managers should comply with local health department guidelines for reinstating employees once they have recovered.
BE PREPARED

How to Clean and Prevent the Spread of Norovirus
Be Prepared

Assemble a body fluid clean up kit

- Personal Protective Equipment
- Cleaning Supplies
- Bleach or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered disinfectant effective against norovirus
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Be Prepared

Norovirus is hard to kill

EPA Registered Disinfectants list

US Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Pesticide Programs
List G: EPA Registered Hospital Disinfectants Effective Against Norovirus (Norwalk-like virus)
16-Jun-16

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<tr>
<td>1839-95</td>
<td>NP 4.5 (D &amp; F) DETERGENT/DISINFECTANT</td>
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Be Prepared
Norovirus is hard to kill

Bleach Works
Prepare a bleach disinfectant solution
(Check with your local health department)
Clean Up Techniques for A Vomiting Incident

• All individuals within a 25 foot radius should be removed from area and should immediately wash hands

• Potentially contaminated clothing should be removed, machine washed in hot water on longest cycle and dried in hottest setting.
Protect Yourself

- Part of an appropriate response includes protecting yourself from germs
  - Wear personal protective equipment
  - To protect your clothes, shoes, and face from splashing and airborne particles and your hands from direct contact with body waste
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Case Study:
Norovirus Outbreak at a North Dakota High School.
May 2005
• About 52 students (grades 7-12) & 8 faculty
• The median incubation period of 32.5 hours involving symptoms of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal cramps lasting about 24 hours
• Health department suspected Norovirus. Lab test confirmed
• Lettuce most likely source of infection

North Dakota Department of Health Epidemiology Report 2005 Year in Review
https://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Newsletters/EpiArchives/NovDec05.pdf
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Resources

The Stomach Bug Book: What School Programs Need to Know

Food-Safe Schools Action Guide

Questions?
USDA is Here to Help!

Visit our “Help Desk” to speak with subject matter experts

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Thank You!