

Guidelines for Suspected Norovirus Outbreaks

Define the outbreak...

Case Definition: vomiting or two or more episodes of diarrhea in a 24 hour period

Outbreak Definition: Onset of 3 to 5 new cases within in a 3 day period

When you have an outbreak...

1. Begin a line listing of ill persons (including staff and residents)
 - Complete for the duration of the outbreak (until you have no new cases for 48 hours)
 - Use the line listing to track the progress of the outbreak and to adjust your control measures.
 - An example is attached or see the following website
 - http://www.wvidep.org/Portals/31/PDFs/IDEP/norovirus/Nursing_Home_GI_outbreak_linelist.xls
2. Implement appropriate control measures (see below)
3. Report the outbreak to your local health department and stay in touch throughout the outbreak.
4. Collect specimens
 - Discuss the need for testing with your local health department or Infectious Disease Epidemiology Division.
 - If you choose to collect specimens, please collect 8-10 stool specimens from recently ill persons. Information on collection and shipment are attached and can also be found on the Office of Laboratory Services website.
 - http://www.wvdhhr.org/labservices/shared/docs/Micro/Collection_and_Transport_Guidelines_for_Noroviruses.pdf

To help control the spread of infection...

1. Practice good hand hygiene
 - Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water
 - Ensure all individuals wash before eating or drinking, after going to the bathroom, or after contact with an ill patient
2. Disinfect contaminated surfaces with the following method:
 - Clean surfaces with a detergent to remove particulate debris, followed by application of a bleach solution for disinfection.
 - Use a chlorine bleach solution with a concentration of 1000-5000ppm (1:10 dilution of household bleach)
3. Do not return to work or school until 48-72 hours after symptoms resolve and practice good hand hygiene after returning.
4. Additional measures for outbreaks in health-care and long-term-care facilities include the following:
 - Use contact precautions for preventing gastroenteritis.
 - Avoid sharing staff members between units or facilities that are not affected.
 - Group symptomatic patients and provide separate toilet facilities for ill and well persons.
 - Instruct visitors on appropriate hand hygiene and monitor compliance with contact isolation precautions.
 - Close affected units to new admissions and transfers.

REMEMBER: Outbreaks are immediately reportable to your local health department!
For further questions or information contact the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Division at
304-558-5358 or 800-423-1271