

HEALTH ALERT NETWORK HEALTH DISTRICT 4

NOROVIRUS ALERT FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

Central District Health Department Urges Medical Providers to Implement Infection Control Measures for Norovirus Patients

March 22, 2011

On March 21st, Central District Health Department (CDHD) confirmed an outbreak of norovirus in a long-term care facility (LTCF). This is the second confirmed norovirus cluster in a local LTCF for 2011. A third suspect outbreak occurred at a wedding reception on March 12.

Norovirus is a highly contagious viral disease often spread by close contact with an ill person. While it normally is a fecal-oral transmission, CDC considers aerosol transmission possible from vomitus.

Norovirus symptoms include a sudden onset of nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea, often accompanied by low-grade fever. Duration of illness is typically 24-48 hours but may be longer in elderly or immune-compromised patients.

Laboratory diagnosis is typically achieved with a stool specimen submitted for viral testing.

Please consider norovirus if a patient presents with a sudden onset of vomiting and/or diarrhea, especially when they have been exposed to another person with similar symptoms. **Implement infection control measures immediately if norovirus is suspected, prior to definitive diagnosis.**

For additional information contact the Office of Communicable Disease Control & Public Health Preparedness at 327-8625.

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