

HEALTH ADVISORY: Long Term Care Facility Norovirus Outbreak Guidance

October 24, 2024

Dear Colleagues,

We hope this message finds you well. Benton County Health Department is sharing long term care facility (LTCF) norovirus outbreak guidance. The norovirus guidance is related to outbreak prevention, reporting, and mitigation. The guidance is below.

LTCF Norovirus Outbreak Guidance	
How to determine if a GASTROINTESTINAL outbreak may be occurring?	<p>“Outbreak” refers, in general, to an unexpected number of similarly ill persons clustered by place and time.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: 2 residents having vomiting and diarrhea within 48 hours of each other would be an outbreak. (If in doubt, please consult Benton County Health Department: cdreporting@bentoncountyor.gov)</p>
When to notify your Local Public Health Authority (LPHA - Benton County)?	<p><u>Outbreak:</u> As soon as the LTCF realizes that an outbreak may be occurring, ideally reporting within 24 hours of detecting an outbreak.</p> <p><u>Reportable Disease:</u> Immediately contact the LPHA if the facility is notified that a resident or staff has been diagnosed with a reportable disease regardless of the current number of cases. See list.</p> <p>NOTE: Although norovirus is not on the “Reportable Diseases List,” outbreaks of norovirus are reportable. If in doubt, please reach out to us at cdreporting@bentoncountyor.gov.</p>
How to notify your LPHA of a suspected GASTROINTESTINAL outbreak?	<p>Benton County Communicable Diseases (CD) reporting email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cdreporting@bentoncountyor.gov (Preferred Contact) <p>Christina Camacho, CD Investigator:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • christina.camacho@bentoncountyor.gov • 541-766-6344 <p>Mary Shaughnessy, CD Registered Nurse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mary.shaughnessy@bentoncountyor.gov • 541-766-6255 <p>Gerald Dyer, Jr., CD Program Manager:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gerald.dyer@bentoncountyor.gov • 541-766-6654 <p>NOTE: The best way to contact Benton County CD is via our team reporting email at: cdreporting@bentoncountyor.gov.</p>
<p>What initial information will the LPHA be requesting from the LTCF(s)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symptom profile (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever) • Any known diagnoses • Onset dates. Initial onset and last onset • Number of known resident/staff cases. • 2 points of contact at the LTCF. • Total number of staff & residents in the LTCF. • If staff cases, where they worked in the LTCF, such as kitchen, direct patient care, admin, etc. • A list of control measures the LTCF has put in place. • Whether the outbreak is facility-wide or contained to a specific hall/division. (Please include the room number, hall, and division (e.g., memory care), especially if more than one section of the LTCF is experiencing an increase in cases of illness.)
<p>Will the LPHA be requesting a case log?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. Please complete the electronic case log and keep it as up to date as possible when cases are identified. • The link and log-in information for the log will be emailed to the LTCF contact once the outbreak has been opened with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA).
<p>How many residents should specimens be requested from?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHA no longer requires stool specimens to be collected for norovirus outbreaks in a LTCF. • However, if the outbreak is no longer thought to be related to norovirus, then OHA requests 3-5 specimens. Benton County can coordinate stool collection with LTCFs with their informed consent. • A minimum of 2 (ideally 3) specimens are necessary for the state to perform the testing. • Because it takes at least 2 positives to confirm the microbial cause of a gastroenteritis outbreak, the Oregon Public Health Laboratory (OSPHL) will not test 1 fecal specimen.
<p>GASTROINTESTINAL control measure recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict sick residents and staff from activities and/or work until asymptomatic for 48 hours (2 days). • Restrict group activities, including group dining. • Switch to paper plates and utensils to prevent virus from entering the kitchen area. • Deep clean and disinfect bathrooms and frequently touched surfaces. • Provide ample handwashing stations. • Enforce strict hand washing after using the restroom and before eating. • Limit visitors and post the Gastrointestinal Outbreak Notice on all entrances to the facility.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please send sick staff home as soon as possible. • Notify staff of the norovirus outbreak and initiate symptom checks before and after work. <p>NOTE: Please refer to the OHA Norovirus Outbreak Detection & Management Instructions for LTCFs for more information.</p>
<p>Determining a GASTROINTESTINAL outbreak is over.</p>	<p>In collaboration with the LPHA, an outbreak can be declared over after the last case is symptom-free and 2 incubation periods (4 days for norovirus) have passed without the identification of any new cases.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: If norovirus is determined to be the cause, an outbreak can be declared over when no new cases have surfaced over a period of 4 days. Norovirus has an incubation period of 12-48 hours.</p>

Additional norovirus resources are located below.

We are grateful for your commitment to the health and well-being of all LTCF residents, staff, and visitors. We wish everyone the best of health and a great fall/winter season.

With gratitude,



Carolina Amador, MD, MPH
Public Health Officer



April Holland
Public Health Administrator

REPORTABLE DISEASES

If a LTCF is notified of a reportable disease, please forward resident or staff's information to the LPHA right away. It is likely that the LPHA will need to follow-up with the LTCF and/or staff. Benton County will inform the LTCF if we become aware of any resident and/or staff who is restricted from attending work due to a communicable disease.

Please see the complete list of reportable diseases at:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/diseasesconditions/communicabledisease/reportingcommunicabledisease/reportingguidelines/pages/index.aspx>

Oregon Reportable Disease Examples		
Botulism	Listeriosis	Tularemia
Campylobacteriosis	Measles	Tuberculosis
Carbapenem-resistant Enterobacterales infection (CRE)	Meningococcal Disease	Typhoid Fever
Cholera	Mpox	Varicella (Chicken Pox)
Cryptosporidiosis	Mumps	Vibrio and Grimontia hollisae
Diphtheria	Novel Influenza	Viral Hemorrhagic Fever
Ebola	Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	West Nile virus
E. coli	Plague	Yersinosis

Relevant Public Health Communicable Diseases Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs)

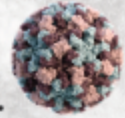
- [OAR 333-018-0000](#) (Reporting Responsibilities)
- [OAR 333-018-0015](#) (What and When to Report)
- [OAR 333-019-0000](#) (Investigation of Reportable Diseases)
- [OAR 333-019-0002](#) (Cooperation with Public Health Authorities)
- [OAR 333-019-0003](#) (Providing Information)
- [OAR 333-019-0010](#) (School, Child Care, and Worksite Restrictions)

The complete list of Oregon Public Health Chapter 333 OARs can be found at:

https://secure.sos.state.or.us/oard/displayChapterRules.action;JSESSIONID_OARD=QExL87RKxFa3jigijhMKAEvVC9JPP5BI9gqGQGKbwF554Rhm3V8!48253970?selectedChapter=89

Norovirus: Facts for Food Workers

Norovirus spreads easily and can make you very sick with diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pain. All food workers should know how to prevent the spread of norovirus.



Foods contaminated with norovirus can make people sick.

Norovirus is the leading cause of foodborne illness outbreaks in the United States. Norovirus causes about half of all outbreaks of food-related illness. Most reported norovirus outbreaks are caused by people who touch or prepare food when they are sick, or sometimes by food that comes from contaminated water. Because the virus is very tiny and spreads easily, it only takes a very small amount of virus to contaminate food and make someone sick.

Food can get contaminated with norovirus when—

- Infected people who have feces (poop) or vomit on their hands touch the food.
- Food is placed on counters or surfaces that have tiny drops of feces (poop) or vomit on them.
- Tiny drops of vomit from an infected person spray through the air and land on the food or surfaces, like countertops.
- Feces (poop) or vomit is in areas where food is grown or harvested.

Food workers with norovirus illness can spread the virus to others.

People who are infected with norovirus can shed billions of norovirus particles in their feces (poop) or vomit. You are most contagious—

- When you feel sick with norovirus, and
- During the first few days after you feel better.

If you work with food when you have norovirus, you can easily contaminate the food and drinks you touch. People who have the contaminated food or drinks you touched can also get norovirus and become sick.

Norovirus causes about half of all outbreaks of food-related illness.

Any food served raw or handled after being cooked can get contaminated with norovirus.



National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases
Division of Viral Diseases



4 Tips to Prevent Norovirus from Spreading

1. When you are sick, do not prepare, serve, or touch food for others

Food workers should stay home when sick and for at least 48 hours after symptoms stop. This also applies to sick workers in schools, daycares, healthcare facilities, and other places where they may expose people to norovirus.

Food workers should inform managers if they have any symptoms of norovirus illness or were recently sick. Even when returning to work, it is especially important that food workers continue to take precautions like frequent handwashing.

For more information, see the FDA Food Code: (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/RetailFoodProtection/FoodCode/>)

2. Practice proper hand hygiene

Always wash hands carefully with soap and water, especially—

- After using the toilet and
- Before eating, preparing, or handling food.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be used in addition to hand washing. However, they should not be used as a substitute for washing with soap and water. In addition, food workers should avoid touching food, especially ready-to-eat food, with bare hands, and use gloves or tongs instead. Hands should still be washed before and after use of gloves in order to prevent cross-contamination.

3. Wash fruits and vegetables and cook seafood well

Carefully wash fruits and vegetables before preparing and eating them.

Cook oysters and other shellfish thoroughly before eating.

Thorough cooking is important because noroviruses can survive temperatures as high as 145°F. Quick steaming processes that are often used for cooking shellfish won't kill the virus.

Food that might be contaminated with norovirus should be thrown out.

4. Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces

After throwing up or having diarrhea, immediately clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces like countertops. Use a chlorine bleach solution with a concentration of 1000 to 5000 ppm (5 to 25 tablespoons of household bleach [5.25%] per gallon of water) or other disinfectant registered as effective against norovirus by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

See EPA's list of registered disinfectants effective against norovirus: (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-q-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-norovirus-feline>)

Visit CDC's norovirus website at www.cdc.gov/norovirus for more information.

What is the Right Way to Wash Your Hands?

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold) and apply soap.
2. Rub your hands together to make a lather and scrub them well; be sure to scrub the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Continue rubbing your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "ABC" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.
6. Use a paper towel or your elbow to open the bathroom door.

See CDC's handwashing website: (www.cdc.gov/handwashing/)



CDC Recommendations for Norovirus Bleach Cleaning

Clean-up and Disinfection for Norovirus ("Stomach Bug")

THESE DIRECTIONS SHOULD BE USED TO RESPOND TO ANY VOMITING OR DIARRHEA ACCIDENT

Note: Anything that has been in contact with vomit and diarrhea should be discarded or disinfected.

1 Clean up

- Remove vomit or diarrhea right away!**
 - Wearing protective clothing, such as disposable gloves, apron and/or mask, wipe up vomit or diarrhea with paper towels
 - Use kitty litter, baking soda or other absorbent material on carpets and upholstery to absorb liquid; do not vacuum material; pick up using paper towels
 - Dispose of paper towel/waste in a plastic trash bag or biohazard bag
- Use soapy water to wash surfaces that contacted vomit or diarrhea and all nearby high-touch surfaces, such as door knobs and toilet handles**
- Rinse thoroughly with plain water**
- Wipe dry with paper towels**

DON'T STOP HERE: GERMS CAN REMAIN ON SURFACES EVEN AFTER CLEANING!

2 Disinfect surfaces by applying a chlorine bleach solution

Steam cleaning may be preferable for carpets and upholstery. Chlorine bleach could permanently stain these. Mixing directions are based on EPA-registered bleach product directions to be effective against norovirus. For best results, consult label directions on the bleach product you are using.

a. Prepare a chlorine bleach solution

Make bleach solutions fresh daily; keep out of reach of children; never mix bleach solution with other cleaners.

IF HARD SURFACES ARE AFFECTED...
e.g., non-porous surfaces, vinyl, ceramic tile, sealed counter-tops, sinks, toilets

 3/4 CUP OF CONCENTRATED BLEACH + 1 GALLON WATER

CONCENTRATION - 600 ppm

IF USING REGULAR STRENGTH BLEACH (5.25%), INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF BLEACH TO 1 CUP.

- Leave surface wet for at least 5 minutes**
- Rinse all surfaces intended for food or mouth contact with plain water before use**

3 Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water

Hand sanitizers may not be effective against norovirus.

Facts about Norovirus



Norovirus is the leading cause of outbreaks of diarrhea and vomiting in the US, and it spreads quickly.

Norovirus spreads by contact with an infected person or by touching a contaminated surface or eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water. Norovirus particles can even float through the air and then settle on surfaces, spreading contamination.

Norovirus particles are extremely small and billions of them are in the stool and vomit of infected people.

Any vomit or diarrhea may contain norovirus and should be treated as though it does.

People can transfer norovirus to others for at least three days after being sick.

IF CLOTHING OR OTHER FABRICS ARE AFFECTED...

- Remove and wash all clothing or fabric that may have touched vomit or diarrhea
- Machine wash these items with detergent, hot water and **bleach** if recommended, choosing the longest wash cycle
- Machine dry



Scientific experts from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) helped to develop this poster. For more information on norovirus prevention, please see <http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/preventing-infection.html>.



co.somerstet.us/health



neha.org



waterandhealth.org



americanchemistry.com



clour.org

disinfect-for-health.org

Updated March, 2015

Gastroenteritis Outbreak Notice



We are currently experiencing many cases of gastroenteritis among our staff and residents.

We are working with the Local Health Department and State Public Health Division to contain and control this highly communicable disease.

Please, for the safety of our residents and their visiting friends and family, we ask that visiting your loved ones be limited as much as possible. Please refrain from bringing young children and elderly to visit; they are most susceptible to intestinal infections.

If you do decide to visit, please check in at the front desk, and take an outbreak fact sheet for your reference.

Oregon Gastroenteritis Control Measures Report



PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Acute and Communicable Disease Prevention
Kate Brown, JD, Governor



GASTROENTERITIS CONTROL MEASURES REPORT

OUTBREAK # _____ FACILITY NAME _____

CORPORATION NAME _____

Completed by: _____ Date: ___/___/___ County: _____

FACILITY POPULATION INFORMATION

_____ Total number of residents in the facility during the outbreak.
 _____ Total number of employees (not including staff from "temp" agencies) during the outbreak.
 _____ Total number of temporary staff hired during this outbreak (enter 0 if temporary staff were not used).
 _____ Total number of patient care staff during the outbreak.

FACILITY QUESTIONS (please include dates)

	Y	?	N	NA	
A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the facility Medicare certified?
B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the facility Medicaid certified?
C	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the facility owned by a corporation?
D	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Does the facility have written procedures for contact isolation of patients?
E					When were facility control measures first implemented? ___/___/___
F					When were control measures lifted and typical procedures resumed? ___/___/___
G					What type of facility is it? (check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Skilled Nursing <input type="checkbox"/> Residential Care <input type="checkbox"/> Assisted Living <input type="checkbox"/> Adult Foster Care <input type="checkbox"/> Memory Care

CONTROL MEASURES FOR RESIDENTS & PATIENTS (please include Start and End dates)

	Y	?	N	NA	
H	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were admissions discontinued until the outbreak was over? If yes, what date were admissions discontinued? ___/___/___ and resumed? ___/___/___
I	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were sick patients confined to their rooms until they were symptom free for 48 hours or more? If yes, when were patients confined? ___/___/___ through ___/___/___
J	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were group activities discontinued until the outbreak was over? ___/___/___ through ___/___/___
K	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were ward transfers discontinued during the outbreak? ___/___/___ through ___/___/___
L	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were visitors restricted during the outbreak? ___/___/___ through ___/___/___
M	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Was patient care equipment dedicated to a single sick patient, or shared among similarly sick patients?
N	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were patients with vomiting or diarrhea put on contact precautions? ___/___/___ through ___/___/___
O	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were patients with vomiting or diarrhea moved to private rooms or to rooms with other patients with vomiting or diarrhea (cohorting)? ___/___/___ through ___/___/___

CONTROL MEASURES FOR STAFF (please include Start and End dates)

	Y	?	N	NA	
P	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Are sinks, soap and paper towels within or just outside each resident's room?
Q	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were the same staff-to-resident assignments maintained throughout the outbreak (cohort nursing)?
R	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do employees have paid sick leave? If yes (check only one box): <input type="checkbox"/> all permanent staff or <input type="checkbox"/> some permanent staff
S	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were there any employees with vomiting or diarrhea restricted from work until symptom-free for 48 hours? Number of restricted employees _____
T					What did patient caregivers use while caring for a patient with vomiting or diarrhea (choose one)? <input type="checkbox"/> gloves only <input type="checkbox"/> gloves & gown both <input type="checkbox"/> gloves, gown & mask <input type="checkbox"/> no equipment
U					What preparation(s) were used to clean up fecal and vomit accidents (choose all that apply)? Bleach & water _____ Other: _____
V	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Were non-essential personnel excluded from outbreak units? ___/___/___ through ___/___/___
W	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Was staff educated on the cause of the outbreak and control measures? When? ___/___/___