



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

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www.weldhealth.org



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Thirty-Six People Sickened with Vomiting and Diarrhea at Summer Camp

Weld County, Colorado – Thirty-two youth, ages 10-17, and 4 adults, became sick with vomiting and diarrhea over the past few days. The students were attending a summer enrichment camp at the University of Northern Colorado, in Greeley. University officials quickly isolated the sick campers and staff and began immediate disinfection of the dining hall and resident areas housing the campers. Samples from several of the affected have been collected and are being sent to the state lab for testing. It will take about a week to receive the results, although norovirus is suspected. Norovirus (once known as the stomach flu) is a highly contagious bug that can make anyone sick. It's the leading cause of outbreaks of diarrhea and vomiting in the United States. "The University has been very proactive in addressing this illness," said Mark E. Wallace, MD, MPH, Executive Director of the Weld County Health Department. The University has suspended the summer camp and the public is not at risk.

Norovirus spreads by contact with an infected person, by touching a contaminated surface, or eating contaminated food or water. The most common symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, and stomach pain. Other symptoms include fever, headache, and body aches. The incubation period for norovirus can be anywhere from 12-48 hours after exposure. There are no medications to prevent or cure norovirus. One of the most common complications from norovirus is dehydration. "If you or a family member becomes too dehydrated, seek medical help," said Wallace.

To prevent the spread of norovirus, the Health Department recommends the following:

- Wash hands carefully with warm soapy water, especially after using the toilet, before eating, and preparing food. "It's important to realize many disinfectant products, including hand sanitizers, are not effective at killing norovirus," said Wallace. "Wash frequently and vigorously with warm soapy water works best."
- Do not prepare food or care for others if you are sick. Anyone preparing food for others should wait at least 2 to 3 days after recovering.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces. After vomiting or having diarrhea, immediately clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces. Use a chlorine bleach solution of 1/3 cup chlorine per 1 gallon of water.
- Wash laundry thoroughly. Immediately remove and wash clothes or linens that may be contaminated with vomit or feces. Wear rubber or disposable gloves while handling soiled items and wash items in hot water with detergent and bleach at the maximum available cycle length, then machine dry in a hot dryer.

For more information, visit: www.weldhealth.org and click on "Health Hot Topics."

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