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Buffalo County Health Department

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

February 19, 2016

Dear Parents and Caregivers:

It is that time of year again, when norovirus is at an increased level in our communities.

Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause gastrointestinal illness in humans, commonly called the “stomach flu”. There is no vaccine for norovirus. The most common effects of this illness are nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea 24-60 hours. However a small number of cases do not experience any symptoms. It may take 12-48 hours to develop symptoms after being exposed.

Noroviruses are highly contagious. It is possible for an infected person to spread the virus before they have symptoms and up to 2 or more weeks after they recover. However, people usually spread the virus during periods of diarrhea and vomiting.

Buffalo County Public Health recommends these steps to prevent the spread of norovirus.

1. Frequent handwashing-Use soap and hot water and scrub for 20 seconds.
2. Environmental Cleaning- Clean all hard surfaces with a 10% bleach solution (other cleaners may not kill the virus).
3. Illness Reporting- Parents should continue to use the school system for reporting illness.
4. Exclusion from School- Ill students and staff should stay home from school and other activities for a minimum of 48 hours after their last symptom (diarrhea and vomiting).

We encourage your family to view the attached video provided by the CDC. It provides an excellent description of the virus, one that is kid friendly. A link to this can be found on the CDC Norovirus webpage.

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF NOROVIRUS?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ey_OV_-pBeo&feature=youtu.be

Stop Norovirus!

Norovirus causes diarrhea and vomiting. It spreads easily from an infected person to others, especially in long-term care facilities. Elderly residents are more likely to become very sick or die from norovirus.

Protect yourself and elderly residents from norovirus.

WASH YOUR HANDS



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time and avoid touching your mouth.

CLEAN SURFACES



Use a bleach-based cleaner or other approved product* to disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched.

WASH LAUNDRY



Remove and wash soiled clothes and linens immediately, then tumble dry.

USE GOWN AND GLOVES



Use gown and gloves when touching or caring for patients to reduce exposure to vomit or fecal matter.

STAY HOME WHEN SICK



If you're sick, stay home and don't take care of or visit people in long-term care facilities for at least 2 days after your symptoms stop.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/norovirus



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

*Use a chlorine bleach solution with a concentration of 1000-5000 ppm (5-25 tablespoons of household bleach [5.25%] per gallon of water) or other disinfectant registered as effective against norovirus by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/list_g_norovirus.pdf

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Contact the Buffalo County Health Department with any questions at (608) 685-4412 or april.glasspoole@co.buffalo.wi.us or nicole.hunger@co.buffalo.wi.us