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 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](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.

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