



# County of Yolo

## HEALTH DEPARTMENT

**Joseph P. Iser, MD, DrPH, MSc**  
**Director – Health Officer**

137 North Cottonwood Street, Woodland, CA 95695  
PHONE - (530) 666-8645 FAX - (530) 666-3984

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Contact: Bruce Sarazin, Director - Environmental Health Division  
Phone: (530) 666-8646

### **Norovirus Outbreak in Davis**

Woodland, CA—The Yolo County Health Department has identified a possible outbreak of Norovirus in the city of Davis, with approximately 70 cases occurring in the past few weeks.

Health officials are providing targeted community education to control the outbreak. “Norovirus can be contained fairly quickly when control measures are started and maintained consistently,” states Bruce Sarazin, Director of the Yolo County Health Department Environmental Health Division. The Health Department has provided Norovirus control guidelines to all affected institutions, businesses, and individuals and will closely monitor the situation.

Outbreaks of gastrointestinal illnesses such as Norovirus are more common in senior populations, since older persons seem to be more vulnerable to infection, as well as in populations living in very close proximity to each other such as cruise ships, hotels, and jails.

Norovirus is an easily transmitted virus that causes gastrointestinal illness, typically with sudden onset of diarrhea, vomiting and stomach cramping, and flu-like symptoms. Additional symptoms can include low-grade fever, chills, and headache. No specific treatment is available. People who are severely dehydrated might need hospitalization to receive fluid and electrolyte therapy. Transmission can be through contaminated food or water or from person to person or contaminated surfaces such as door knobs.

Symptoms of Norovirus infection typically appear within one to two days after exposure. Infected people usually get better in one to three days. Individuals may still be infectious with the virus for several days after symptoms disappear. For that reason, Yolo County health officials are advising those who believe they have been infected with Norovirus to stay home for at least two days after they start feeling better.

Norovirus can be spread from person to person by:

- Eating food or drinking liquids contaminated by an infected person.
- Touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then touching their mouth or eating without washing their hands first.

To prevent the spread of infection, individuals should follow these guidelines:

- Practice thorough hand washing, especially after using the bathroom, after changing diapers, before preparing foods, and before eating.
- Wash hands more often when someone in the household is sick.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces with a household bleach solution (2 teaspoons of bleach per gallon of water) immediately after vomiting or diarrheal accidents. This is particularly important with surfaces frequently touched, such as door handles and faucets.
- Wash and/or peel fruits and vegetables before eating them and thoroughly cook all meat, fish, and shellfish.
- Avoid preparing food for others while symptoms are present and for at least 3 days after recovery.
- If you work in a food or healthcare facility you should not return to work within 3 days of your last symptoms.

“Frequent hand washing is the number one way that everyone can help stop the spread of Norovirus and other food and waterborne illnesses,” states Sarazin.

If you think you may be infected, wash your hands often, contact your health care provider, and drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.

For more information, contact the Yolo County Health Department at: (530) 666-8645.

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