



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR
PRESCHOOLS, SCHOOLS AND DAYCARES (11/28/07)**

Central Michigan District Health Department

“Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities”

Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Isabella, Osceola and Roscommon Counties

Visit our website at www.cmdhd.org.

Your assistance is requested in helping to stop the spread of a viral-like gastroenteritis (commonly referred to as the “stomach flu”).

Every year, the Central Michigan District Health Department and Michigan Department of Community Health receive reports from many different areas locally and throughout Michigan of people with a vomiting and diarrhea illness.

The viral-like illness is similar to a disease caused by a germ called the Norovirus. Norovirus causes abdominal cramping, vomiting, and diarrhea. The symptoms last 1 – 2 days. The time from exposure to the onset of symptoms is an average of 36 hours. The most common way a Norovirus outbreak is spread is via the fecal-oral route. However, this virus also lives on hard surfaces (like door knobs, handles, etc.) much longer than other viruses.

Schools, preschools and daycare facilities can contribute to the prevention of the spread of this viral-like gastroenteritis in several important ways.

- Frequent thorough hand washing with warm water and soap by staff and students.
- Promptly disinfecting contaminated surfaces with household chlorine bleach-based cleaners (please see the attached cleaning guidelines).
- Prompt handling (washing) of soiled clothing and linens.
- Avoiding food or water from sources that may be contaminated.
- Food Service employees should review safe food handling practices.
- Staff should be monitored closely for signs of the “stomach flu”. Any employee that has had any vomiting and or diarrhea should not be allowed to work and should not be allowed to return to work for at least 3 days after the symptoms subside.
- Students should also be monitored and any student that has had any of the above signs or symptoms should be promptly sent home, and should not be allowed back for at least 3 days after symptoms subside.

It is very important to turn in your IP 10 reports (pink sheets) every Friday before 12 noon to your local health department branch office either electronically or by fax. Please be sure to specify the nature of the illnesses you are reporting.

We have placed some documents that you can include in newsletters to parents or in your Friday folder packets on our website. Please feel free to make as many copies as you wish. If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact your local branch office of the Central Michigan District Health Department or visit our website at www.cmdhd.org.

Sincerely,
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Health Officer

Robert Graham, DO, MPH
Medical Director