



**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR
LOCAL RESIDENTS**

Central Michigan District Health Department
“Promoting Healthy Families, Healthy Communities”

For more information, please call: (989) 773-5921 ext. 1413
2012 E. Preston Avenue, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858, www.cmdhd.org

Your assistance is requested in helping to stop the spread of viral gastroenteritis (GAS-tro-en-ter-I-tis), commonly referred to as the “stomach flu”. Many other viral infections, such as the common cold, bronchitis, and influenza, are also causing high levels of illness at this time and the guidance recommended to prevent the “stomach flu” will also help prevent these other infections.

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

The “stomach flu” is very often caused by the germ Norovirus. Norovirus causes abdominal cramping, vomiting, and diarrhea. The symptoms last typically last 1 to 2 days. The time from exposure to the onset of symptoms is 24 to 28 hours. Norovirus is **extremely contagious** and spread by the fecal-oral route, which can occur easily by eating or drinking items that have become contaminated with norovirus, touching surfaces or objects with norovirus and then touching the mouth, or having direct contact with an infected person.

Individuals can help spread of this viral-like gastroenteritis in several important ways.

- Frequent hand washing with warm water and soap
- Promptly disinfecting contaminated surfaces with household chlorine bleach-based cleaners that are left on surfaces for at least 10 minutes
- Washing soiled clothing and linens
- Avoiding food or water from sources that may have been in contact with germs
- If you work in a nursing home, take care of patients, work in childcare, or handle food, you should not return to work for at least 2 days (48 hours) after all your symptoms go away
- Avoid cooking for others, caring for others especially the young or elderly, going to work, and attending group functions until 2 days after the symptoms of your illness have gone away

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,

Steve Hall, R.S., MS
Health Officer

Jennifer Morse, MD
Medical Director