Public Health
MADISON & DANE COUNTY
Healthy people and places

Basic Norovirus Control Steps for Long-Term Care Facilities

Handwashing is the most important control measure during a norovirus outbreak. All residents and staff should wash their hands with soap and water often, especially after using the restroom, helping a person use the restroom, before eating, and between contacts with residents. Alcohol hand gel may be used if running water is not available. Handwashing videos in English and Spanish are available at http://www.publichealthmdc.com/publications/ under Food Protection & Foodborne Illness

Resident Isolation & Quarantine

- Isolate all patients with diarrhea or vomiting until 48 hours after last symptom.
- Do not move patients from a unit with symptomatic people to a unit with no symptomatic people.
- Do not admit new residents or move residents to an affected unit until all residents and staff on the affected unit have been asymptomatic for 48 hours.
- Discontinue activities in which residents congregate in a common area to the extent possible, including dining together.

Staff

- Monitor all staff members for symptoms on a regular basis (at least at the beginning of each shift).
- Exclude all symptomatic staff members from the facility until 48 hours after last symptom. Inform employees they should also not work in other healthcare or food setting for the same time period.
- Do not move staff from a unit with symptomatic residents or staff to a unit with no symptomatic residents or staff.
- Gloves, mask, and gown or protective clothing should be worn whenever contact with an infected patient or contaminated environment is anticipated. PPE must be changed between residents.

Cleaning

- Surfaces: Clean all surfaces that people touch with Virkon (follow packaging instructions) or a bleach solution. Leave bleach on surface for 10-20 minutes then rinse with clean water.
    - Stainless steel, food/mouth contact items: 200 ppm (5 tablespoons of bleach in 1 gallon of water (1:250 dilution))
    - Non-porous surfaces, tile floors, counter tops, sinks, toilets: 1000 ppm (1/3 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water (1:50 dilution))
    - Porous surfaces, wooden floors: 5000 ppm (1 cup plus 2/3 cup bleach in 1 gallon of water (1:10 dilution))
- Laundry: Wash laundry in hot water if possible. Dryer heat should also inactivate norovirus. Do not shake contaminated laundry to avoid aerosolizing norovirus.
- Steam clean carpets and soft furnishings. Vacuuming and buffing floors could aerosolize norovirus.
- Staff cleaning diarrhea or vomiting accidents should wear personal protective equipment: gloves, mask, eye protection or faceshield, and gown or protective clothing.

Visitors and Other Non-Residents

- Post signs on all entrances notifying visitors of the outbreak and instruct not to enter if symptomatic.
- All people entering the facility should wash their hands upon entry and exit.
- Considers limiting or suspending visitors to affected units or the entire facility.
- Consider limiting or suspending services to non-residents (such as physical rehabilitation).
- Consider suspending new admissions.

CDC Norovirus in Healthcare Facilities website: http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/id_norovirusFS.html