

## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Health district investigates illness

(June 12, 2002) – The Clark County Health District has received numerous reports of an increase in gastrointestinal illnesses in the community. Health district investigations into two outbreaks have confirmed the presence of Norwalk-like viruses. These viruses are common, easily transmitted from person-to-person, and cause symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal pains.

While the illness usually lasts from 1-3 days, and resolves on its own, persons experiencing symptoms should consult a physician for guidance on proper treatment. The illness may be more severe for older persons, those with debilitating health conditions including those who are immunocompromised, and the very young.

“Currently our area emergency departments are reporting high volumes. While we don’t want to discourage those who are very ill from accessing emergency rooms when appropriate, we urge normally healthy people who may be experiencing symptoms of the virus to consult with their private physicians first,” said Dr. Donald Kwalick, chief health officer.

In order to interrupt the spread of the disease the health district strongly recommends the following precautions:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap for at least 20 seconds and rinse well under running water. Follow this procedure each time you use the restroom and before eating or drinking.
- Should you experience any symptoms of nausea, vomiting or diarrhea consult with your physician and avoid work and limit person-to-person contact as much as possible.

For more information, or to report a suspected disease outbreak, contact the Clark County Health District Office of Epidemiology at 383-1378.

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