



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 9, 2014

Southern Nevada Health District
Norovirus

LAS VEGAS – The Southern Nevada Health District has received increased reports of gastrointestinal illness in the community and has confirmed norovirus as the cause of a recent outbreak. The health district is stressing the importance of practicing appropriate hygiene to limit the spread of norovirus and other types of gastrointestinal illness. People who are sick should stay home from work or school until at least three days after their symptoms have ended. In addition, people who are sick or who are recovering from a gastrointestinal infection, including norovirus, should not prepare food or care for others until three days after they have recovered.

Norovirus is a common virus and is easily spread from person-to-person. Symptoms usually appear within one to two days after being exposed to the virus, but illness can occur as soon as 12 hours afterward.

Norovirus is a self-limiting illness and symptoms resolve after a few days. The most serious complication can be dehydration, especially in children or older adults. Norovirus cannot be treated with antibiotics. Treatment should consist of drinking fluids to prevent dehydration. It is important that people who are sick with norovirus, or any other gastrointestinal illness, stay home from work or school and avoid contact with other people. Individuals with chronic medical conditions or questions should contact their health care provider.

Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and abdominal cramps. Sometimes, symptoms include low-grade fever, muscle aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Norovirus can be spread when symptoms begin and continue until about three days after symptoms are gone. Some people are infectious for as long as two weeks after their symptoms are gone.

The most important effective method to prevent illness and to prevent further spread is hand washing with soap and warm water after using the bathroom, before and after cooking and food preparation, setting the table, handling laundry, or changing diapers. Surfaces that could have been contaminated **by an ill person** should be cleaned, then disinfected immediately with a chlorine bleach solution made by adding 5 to 25 tablespoons of household bleach* to one gallon of water. In addition, it is important that people who are ill should wash their hands thoroughly and use disposable or paper towels after using the bathroom.

For additional information about norovirus, visit the health district website, www.SNHD.info.

*The strength of typical household bleach is 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite.