



John F. Kennedy High School

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Dear John F. Kennedy Families:

You may have read about a gastrointestinal illness, known as norovirus, which is affecting schools in the County of Sacramento. Symptoms include vomiting and diarrhea many times a day.

As of May 8, we have not had any confirmed norovirus cases at our school or in the District. However, we have had children and staff members experience some of the symptoms. As a precautionary measure, we are asking you to help us keep our students, staff, and visitors healthy. The norovirus is highly contagious and spreads rapidly. You can help us by taking the following steps if you have a sick child who is vomiting or has diarrhea.

1. It is critical that you please keep your students at home if they have had symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea or fever until 48 hours after the symptoms have been resolved. If you take your child to the doctor's office, please ask your health care provider about providing stool samples to rule out norovirus.
2. Notify the school to report your child's illness.

Our school and district are taking proactive steps to prevent the norovirus. In situations where students or staff members have experienced symptoms, classrooms and other areas have been deep cleaned, and students and staff have been asked not to return to the school until they are symptom-free for two days. We are also working closely with the Sacramento County Health Department.

Key facts and a prevention tip sheet are attached. If you have any questions, please contact the Sacramento County Public Health Department at 916-875-5881.

Thank you.

John F. Kennedy High School

Preventing Norovirus Infection
(Source: Center for Disease Prevention Website)

- Practice proper hand hygiene by washing your hands carefully with soap and water, especially after using the toilet and changing diapers, and always before eating, preparing, or handling food.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be used in addition to hand washing. But, they should not be used as a substitute for washing with soap and water. Wash fruits and vegetables and cook seafood thoroughly.
- Carefully wash fruits and vegetables before preparing and eating them. Cook oysters and other shellfish thoroughly before eating them.
- Be aware that noroviruses are relatively resistant. They can survive temperatures as high as 140°F and quick steaming processes that are often used for cooking shellfish.
- Food that might be contaminated with norovirus should be thrown out.
- Keep sick infants and children out of areas where food is being handled and prepared.
- When you are sick, do not prepare food or care for others who are sick. You should not prepare food for others or provide healthcare while you are sick and for at least 2 days after symptoms stop. This also applies to sick workers in settings such as schools and daycares where they may expose people to norovirus.
- After throwing up or having diarrhea, immediately clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces with a chlorine bleach solution. Use a chlorine bleach solution of 5–25 tablespoons of household bleach [5.25%] per gallon of water) or other disinfectant registered as effective against norovirus by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Wash laundry thoroughly. Immediately remove and wash clothes or linens that may be contaminated with vomit or stool (feces).
- You should handle soiled items carefully and gently. Wear rubber or disposable gloves while handling soiled items. Wash your hands immediately after. Wash the items with detergent at the maximum available cycle length then machine dry them.