

Norovirus - Public Health Update #3

Update on the norovirus outbreak associated with the California Hotel and Casino

March 30, 2004

Following are updated totals for the number of gastrointestinal illness complaints pertaining to a norovirus outbreak associated with the California Hotel and Casino in Downtown Las Vegas.

Breakdown by week:*

<u>Illness Onset</u>	<u>Health District (All Sources)</u>	<u>Boyd Security Subset</u>
March 20 - 26	32	30
March 13 - 19 (updated)	57	33
March 5 - 12 (updated)	105	39

Breakdown by month:*

<u>Illness Onset</u>	<u>Health District (All Sources)</u>	<u>Boyd Security Subset</u>
March, 2004 (partial)	312	144
February, 2004 (updated)	640	121
January, 2004 (updated)	432	76
December, 2003 (updated)	197	42

Total Cases (updated):*

<u>Illness Onset</u>	<u>Health District (All Sources)</u>	<u>Boyd Security Subset</u>
December 3, 2003 - March 28, 2004	1,581	383

*The health district number includes the Boyd security subset.

The Clark County Health District compiles gastrointestinal illness complaints from several sources, including:

- Direct, public "self-reports" to the health district
- Internal security reports from Boyd Gaming (corporate owner of the California Hotel)
- Hospital and doctor's office reports

Duplicate reports are removed from the final number. Each individual included must have visited or stayed at the California Hotel during the outbreak time frame and meet the norovirus case definition of acute vomiting and/or diarrhea.

(more)

Continuing Efforts/Information:

- A team of communicable disease specialists from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has been in Las Vegas since March 18, and continues to assist the health district in the investigation and mediation of the outbreak.
- Heightened sanitation practices, including the use of hospital-grade disinfectants, are continuing at the California Hotel and aboard charter Omni Air International flights that transport Hawaiian tourists bound for the hotel to and from Las Vegas.
- The health district has made no recommendation against visiting or staying at the California Hotel and Casino, but recommends guests wash their hands diligently and frequently, especially after using the restroom and before eating.

Background Information (released previously):

The Clark County Health District Office of Epidemiology will classify the current outbreak as over when a sustained decline to baseline levels (an average of 2 - 3 illness complaints per week) has been observed for a period of one month (the amount of time noroviruses can survive on environmental surfaces).

The health district reminds guests of any hotel to promptly report incidents of illness to the hotel housekeeping or general staff. Areas affected by vomiting and/or diarrhea must be properly cleaned and disinfected to protect others from getting ill. Additionally, the health district reminds ill persons they are considered infectious until three days after their symptoms have resolved. Appropriate sanitation and personal hygiene should be observed even after an ill person begins to feel better.

Public contact:

Complaints of illness in connection with the outbreak may be reported to the Clark County Health District Office of Epidemiology at **(702) 759-1300**. (This is an updated number, due to an unrelated phone system upgrade at the health district. Calls to the previously-released number will be automatically forwarded to the new system).

Media Contact:

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