



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



October 4, 2019

School Outbreak Guidance

When to call Washington County Public Health (available 24/7 at 503-846-3594):

- Unusually high absenteeism in students or staff with vomiting and/or diarrhea in the same classroom or across the school within a two-week period
- Students or staff ill with high fevers or bloody stool
- Evidence of severe illness (i.e. multiple students or staff hospitalized with similar symptoms)
- Unusually high absenteeism in students or staff with fever and cough and/or sore throat.
 - ≥ 10 people or $\geq 20\%$ of facility, absence is prolonged ≥ 3 days
 - In school, $\geq 40\%$ of students in any one classroom absent

What information to include in the initial report to Washington County Public Health:

- Total number of students, staff and food handlers in your school
- Total number of ill students, staff and food handlers and classrooms/grade levels affected
- General symptoms and when symptoms started
 - It is important to distinguish between gastroenteritis (i.e. nausea, vomiting, diarrhea) and respiratory (i.e. fever, cough, sneezing, sore throat) symptoms as early as possible
- Any lab-confirmed illnesses, hospitalizations or deaths
- Baseline absentee rates (the expected number of absent staff and/or students).

What to return to Washington County Public Health during an outbreak investigation:

- Line list with information for ill students and staff
 - A line list should be updated daily and sent to Washington County Public Health by email or fax (503-846-3644) until the county declares the outbreak over
 - For person-to-person gastroenteritis outbreaks (vomiting and/or diarrhea) and/or respiratory (fever and cough and/or sore throat) outbreaks, Washington County Public Health requires the names, contact information and medical provider information, if applicable, for the **first 10** ill students and staff, after which only a daily count of additional ill students and staff is required.
 - The line list assists public health in determining what is most likely making students and staff ill, how individuals are likely becoming ill and what measures are needed to prevent others from becoming ill
 - Information can be recorded from a health room log or absence log

How to stop other students and staff from becoming ill:

- Send anyone home who develops symptoms at school; advise ill individuals with diarrhea and/or vomiting to stay home for 24 hours after symptoms have stopped.
- Send anyone home who develops symptoms at school; advise ill individuals with fever and cough and/or sore throat to stay home for 24 hours after symptoms have stopped.
- Enforce frequent handwashing and discourage the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Have custodial staff consult with Washington County Environmental Health (503-846-8722) regarding cleaning and disinfection

What to expect from Washington County Public Health:

- Guidance on: cleaning and disinfection, exclusions and how and when to notify parents and staff
- Outreach to parents of ill students and ill staff providing education to prevent others from becoming ill, clarifying symptoms and when symptoms started, how long symptoms have lasted, medical care sought and willingness to provide a specimen for testing
- Daily check-ins during the work week about any new ill individuals
- Notification of when the outbreak investigation is closed

For questions, please call Washington County Disease Control and Prevention: 503-846-3594