

本署檔號 Our Ref.: (20) in DH SEB CD/8/39/1

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Dear Doctors,

**Increase in noroviral gastroenteritis outbreaks
in elderly homes and hospitals in May and June**

We would like to bring to your attention to the recent increase in noroviral gastroenteritis outbreaks in elderly homes and hospitals in May and June. Since May, there were already 35 confirmed norovirus outbreaks in elderly homes and seven in hospitals affecting a total of 565 persons. These compared with 17 and seven outbreaks in elderly homes and hospitals respectively and 260 affected persons in the first four months of this year. A total of 74 cases of noroviral gastroenteritis outbreaks in all institutions involving 999 persons have been reported so far this year. In 2005, there were a total of 42 norovirus outbreaks in institutions, affecting 643 persons.

Gastroenteritis caused by Norovirus can occur throughout the year but is more active in the winter months. However, we have observed a prolonged norovirus season this year.

To this end, I would like to seek your assistance in advising your staff and patients to adhere to strict personal, food and environmental hygiene. In particular,

- ✧ To wash hand using liquid soap especially before meals and after going to toilet
- ✧ Any vomiting episode need to be properly handled and disinfected by applying diluted bleach 1:49 to the soiled surface and neighbouring area;
- ✧ Ensure all the water closets are in proper function and toilet areas are regularly cleansed and disinfected.



Patients with vomiting or diarrhea should be advised to refrain from work especially those working in institutional settings. If you notice an increase in the number of residents or staff of institutions with symptoms of viral gastroenteritis, please inform the Central Notification Office of CHP as soon as possible via Fax: 2477 2770 or Tel:2477 2772. CHP will provide advice in the management of such cases and take appropriate control measures.

For more information on Norovirus, please visit the website of CHP at http://www.chp.gov.hk/content.asp?lang=en&info_id=33&id=24&pid=9

Yours sincerely,



(Dr. S K CHUANG)

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