



Winter 2009

A Food Safety Newsletter for Food Service

Food Safety Works

A publication of Colorado State University Larimer County Extension
and Larimer County Department of Health and Environment

Welcome to *Food Safety Works* Newsletter

Welcome to the first issue of the *Food Safety Works* newsletter! The newsletter is a joint project of CSU Extension's Larimer County Office and Larimer County Department of Health and Environment in an effort to enhance food safety efforts in Larimer County. The quarterly newsletter for food service workers will contain articles on current issues in food safety, emerging pathogens, preventing foodborne illness, regulation updates and local food safety news. We hope you will find the newsletter informative and interesting.



The Larimer County Food Safety Team

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Food Safety Works Class Educators

- Nora Garza
- Edie McSherry

Cut Tomatoes added to Potentially Hazardous Foods (PHF) List

Cut tomatoes have been added to the list of potentially hazardous foods (PHF) requiring temperature control. Why tomatoes? In a word, *Salmonella*.



Salmonella has been related to several outbreaks caused by the consumption of raw fruits and vegetables that may have been contaminated prior to harvest. Tomatoes are considered a potential vehicle of salmonellosis and have been identified as the cause of multistate outbreaks. Different types of tomatoes, including beefsteak, Roma and grape tomatoes, have been associated with foodborne illness.

To prevent foodborne illness, it is important to follow safe handling recommendations. Food handlers should be aware of the need to hold cut tomatoes at 41°F or below at all times. Whole uncut tomatoes may be held at room temperatures until they are cut and then must be cooled to 41°F within 4 hours.

Safe Food News, Spring 2008

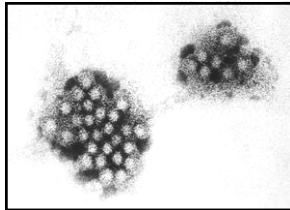
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NOROVIRUSES: LEADING CAUSE OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS

What are Noroviruses?

Noroviruses are members of a group of viruses called caliciviruses also known previously as “Norwalk-like viruses”. Infection with norovirus affects the stomach and intestines, causing an illness called gastroenteritis, or “stomach flu.” This “stomach flu” is *not* related to the flu (or influenza), which is a respiratory illness caused by influenza virus. Noroviruses may be responsible for as many as half of all food-related illness. In many of these illnesses, it was a sick food worker who caused the outbreak. As a foodborne pathogen, viruses behave quite differently from bacteria or parasites. Viruses can't grow outside of a person's body or in food.



What are the symptoms?

Norovirus symptoms include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and some stomach cramping. Some people experience a low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and tiredness. Symptoms usually begin 24 to 48 hrs after the virus has been ingested and lasts 24 to 60 hrs. For the very young, the elderly, and persons with weak immune systems, norovirus illness can lead to dehydration requiring medical attention.

How do people become infected?

Noroviruses are highly contagious - as few as 10 to 100 viral particles may be enough to make you sick. Noroviruses are found primarily in the stool or vomit of infected people. Norovirus outbreaks can take place anywhere - restaurants, cruise ships, nursing homes, hospitals, schools, summer camps, and family dinners. In the last three years, 70% of the foodborne outbreaks identified by Larimer County Department of Health and Environment have been caused by norovirus.

Why is norovirus infection important for food handlers?

People working with food who are sick with norovirus are a particular risk to others, because they handle the food and drink many other people will consume. Since the virus is so small, a sick food handler can easily – without meaning to – contaminate the food he or she is handling. Many of those eating the contaminated food may become ill, causing an outbreak.

NOROVIRUSES: COMO CAUSA PRINCIPAL DE ENFERMEDAD TRANSMITADA POR LOS ALIMENTOS

¿Qué son los Norovirus?

Los Norovirus son miembros de un grupo de virus llamados calicivirus también conocidos previamente como “virus tipo-Norwalk”. La infección con norovirus afecta al estómago y a los intestinos, causando una enfermedad llamada gastroenteritis, o “gripe estomacal.” Esta “gripe estomacal” no se relaciona con la gripe (o el resfriado común), que es una enfermedad respiratoria causada por el virus de la influenza. Los Norovirus pueden ser los causantes de hasta el cincuenta por ciento de todas las enfermedades relacionadas con los alimentos. En muchos de estos padecimientos, fue un trabajador de la industria de la comida que estaba enfermo el que causó el brote. Al ser patógenos transmitidos por los alimentos, los virus se comportan de diferente manera que las bacterias o los parásitos. Los virus no pueden crecer fuera del cuerpo de una persona o en el alimento.

¿Cuáles son los síntomas?

Entre los síntomas del norovirus se incluyen náusea, vómito, diarrea y algunos retorcijones en el estómago. Algunas personas experimentan algo de fiebre, escalofríos, dolor de cabeza, dolores musculares, y cansancio. Los síntomas generalmente aparecen en un lapso de 24 a 48 horas después de ingerir el virus y duran de 24 a 60 horas. Para los menores, los ancianos, y las personas con los sistemas inmunológicos débiles, la enfermedad del norovirus puede causar deshidratación, la cual requiere atención médica.

¿Cómo se infecta la gente?

Los norovirus son altamente contagiosos - pueden ser suficientes tan solo de 10 a 100 partículas virales para infectarse. Los norovirus se encuentran sobre todo en las heces fecales o el vómito de la gente infectada. Los brotes de norovirus pueden ocurrir dondequiera – desde los restaurantes, los barcos de cruceros, los asilos, los hospitales, las escuelas, y los campamentos de verano, hasta los restaurantes familiares. En los pasados tres años, el 70% de los brotes de enfermedades producidas por los alimentos, identificados por el Departamento de Salud y Medio Ambiente del Condado de Larimer, han sido causados por el norovirus.

¿Por qué la infección del norovirus es importante para los trabajadores de la industria alimenticia?

La gente que trabaja con los alimentos, que está enferma con el norovirus, presenta un riesgo particular para otras personas, porque están manipulando los alimentos y bebidas que muchas otras gentes consumirán. Puesto que el virus es tan pequeño, un empleado enfermo puede - sin quererlo- contaminar la comida que él o ella está manejando. Muchos de los que consumirán el alimento contaminado se podrán enfermar, causando un brote de infecciones transmitidas por estos alimentos.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT NOROVIRUS GASTROENTERITIS?

- Food workers with gastro-intestinal illness should stay home from work until 2- 3 days after they are free of diarrhea and vomiting.
- For those returning to work after being sick, consider assigning non food-related duties such as working the cash register.
- Enforce strict hand washing rules after workers use the bathroom and before handling food.
- Use a hand barrier such as clean, single-use plastic gloves to handle ready-to-eat food.
- Use a chlorine based sanitizer on food contact surfaces. Many quat sanitizers are ineffective in killing the virus that causes norovirus.
- Thoroughly wash raw fruits and vegetables.
- Surfaces contaminated with vomit or stool should be cleaned up quickly then disinfected with a bleach solution mixed at 1 cup bleach per gallon of water. Immediately remove and launder or discard contaminated mop heads and cloths to prevent cross contamination.

➤ Los trabajadores de la industria alimenticia enfermos con gastroenteritis deberán permanecer en casa y no presentarse al trabajo hasta 2- 3 días después de no tener diarrea ni vómito.



➤ Haga cumplir estrictamente el reglamento del lavado de manos después de que los trabajadores usen el sanitario y antes de manipular la comida.



Food Program Summary and Top 5 Violations in 2008

In 2008, 1,569 food establishments operated in Larimer County and 105 new establishments opened. The Health Department conducted 3,091 inspections, including 171 investigations into complaints and reports of foodborne illness. Two confirmed outbreaks, affecting about 100 people were identified. Enforcement actions totaled 259, including 15 closures due to imminent health hazards. Of the 8,451 violations cited by the Health Department in 2008, 3,898 (46%) were critical item violations. These are violations, which left uncorrected, would be most likely to cause an illness.

The following were the five most frequently cited critical item violations in restaurants in Larimer County in last year:

1. Foods not held at safe temperatures (62%).
2. Hand washing sinks not accessible or not stocked with soap and towels (26%).
3. Workers not washing hands or observed with poor hygienic practices (25%).
4. Equipment and utensils not sanitized during warewashing (22%).
5. Chemicals not stored away from food and utensils (12%).

A proactive food safety management system and a knowledgeable, well trained staff can reduce the occurrence of critical item violations. *Food Safety Works* food handler training courses can provide the basic skills that anyone who works in a food establishment needs to know. For more information about training or to set up a private training contact: Edie McSherry, at (970) 498-6008 or go to www.larimer.org/ext Food safety inspection results can be viewed at the Health Department's website at: <http://www.larimer.org/health/ehs/food.asp>

Food Safety Works Class Schedule

Fort Collins

Larimer County Extension
1525 Blue Spruce Drive
Monday, April 6
Monday, May 4

Loveland

Chilson Ctr., 700 E. 4th St.
Monday March 9
Monday, April 13 (Spanish)

Cost: \$25 per person

Red Feather Lakes

Call for location.
Tuesday, April 28

**Pre-registration is required:
Call 498-6008**

Thumbs UP!

To the following full service, fast food, schools and catering facilities who made food safety a priority! The establishments below received a routine health inspection between October 1, 2008 and December 31, 2008. All received an EXCELLENT rating! At time of their inspection these establishments had no deep critical violations such as improper cooling or reheating, lack of hand washing, cross contamination, they made sure workers did not come to work sick, and practiced proper glove use to cover cuts and burns and to prevent bare hand contact with ready to eat foods.

Antique Café., Loveland
29TH St. Wing Shack, Loveland
Bacon Elementary School, Fort Collins
Bisetti's Ristorante, Fort Collins
Breakfast Club, Fort Collins
Cache la Poudre Jr. High, Laporte
CB Potts/Bighorn Brewing, Fort Collins
Chipotle Mexican Grill, Harmony Rd., Fort Collins
Chipotle Mexican Grill, Fall River Dr., Loveland
Culvers, Johnstown
Fort Collins Country Club
Fun for All, Loveland
Hampton Inn, Stone Creek Circle, Loveland
Hunan, Fort Collins
Inglenook, Loveland
Jay's Bistro, Fort Collins
KFC/Taco Bell, Fox Trail Rd., Loveland
Kruse Elementary School, Fort Collins
Las Salsitas Mexican Grill, Fort Collins
Loveland High School
Lucille's, Fort Collins
Main St. Catering at Immanuel Lutheran, Loveland
Mary Blair Elementary School, Loveland
Match Ups, Fort Collins
McDonald's Foxtrail Dr., Loveland
McDonald's, W. Elizabeth, Fort Collins
Monroe Elementary, Loveland
Monties Canadian Grille, Fort Collins
Mountain Café, Fort Collins

Mountain View High School, Loveland
Nick-N-Willy's Pizza, Loveland
Night Shotz, Loveland
Olive Street Bakery, Fort Collins
Panda Express, Loveland
Pizza Hut, S. Shields, Fort Collins
Pizza Street, Loveland
Putnam Elementary School, Fort Collins
Qdoba, E. Harmony Rd., Fort Collins
Ravencrest Chalet, Estes Park
Ristorante Damosso, Loveland
Romano's Macaroni Grill, Fort Collins
Rustic Oven, N. College, Fort Collins
Smashburger, Fort Collins
Sonic Drive-In, Timberline Rd., Fort Collins
St. John's Catholic School, Loveland
St. Joseph School, Fort Collins
Sunset Jazz Club/Event, Fort Collins
Taco Del Mar, W. Elizabeth, Fort Collins
Tastebuds, Fort Collins
Truscott Elementary School, Loveland
View Restaurant, Estes Park
Village Inn Restaurant, E. Harmony Rd., Fort Collins
Wendy's, Eagle Dr., Loveland
Wendy's, S. College, Fort Collins
Yum Yum Restaurant, Fort Collins
Yung's Recipes, N. College, Fort Collins



Contact us:

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