

Update regarding Gastroenteritis February 7, 2012

We saw a dramatic spike in cases of vomiting and diarrhea (gastroenteritis) beginning last night. Typical symptoms include: nausea, stomach cramping, vomiting and diarrhea. A few students have had lightheadedness and one fainted. Some also have headache, body aches and fever.

These cases of gastroenteritis are very likely caused by a virus, probably Norovirus. Please review this posting at www.wesleyan.edu/healthservices/ofnote/Forms/Gastroenteritis.pdf for detailed information. As is typical, the vomiting phase usually lasts 6-8 hours.

Representatives from the Student Affairs, Food Services, Public Safety and Residential Life met this morning to review the outbreak and plan response and the Connecticut Department of Public Health has been consulted. No specific source or origin of the outbreak has been identified. The University will be increasing cleaning of bathrooms in dorms with high numbers of cases, collecting data about cases to identify patterns and conducting other interventions as appropriate.

Key Points:

Prevention

Wash your hands with soap and water before touching anything that will go in your mouth.

Avoid communal foods that others may have directly touched.

Treatment

Stay in bed and minimize your exposure to others.

DO NOT attempt to eat or drink anything for at least two hours after you last vomited, it will only make your symptoms worse and prolong your vomiting.

If vomiting is very heavy or lasting more than a few hours, a medication can be prescribed which is usually quite effective in treating nausea and vomiting. Call the health center or doctor on call (860) 685-2470.

As of Wednesday February 8, 2012 we will have this medication at the Health Center.

After hours, this medication will need to be picked up (by a friend) at a pharmacy in town.

If your symptoms are extreme, especially if you are faint on standing, call the health center or doctor on call (860) 685-2470. You may need referral to the Emergency Department.