

MOHAVE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Patty Mead, R.N. M.S.
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For immediate release

Gastrointestinal Illness Update

November 17, 2006 (Mohave County, Kingman) – The Nursing Services Division of the Mohave County Department of Public Health (MCDPH) is continuing their investigating into an outbreak of gastrointestinal illness in the Golden Valley area. To date, the investigation has not revealed any link with a food borne or water borne source. Specimens are being forwarded to the State Lab for testing to assist in determining cause of illness. MCDPH staff met with officials at the Black Mountain Elementary School this afternoon to discuss the findings to date and to provide disease control recommendations. According to Christy Bronston, Nursing Services Manager, “Some of the recommendations we made were to disinfect surfaces with bleach solutions and to steam clean carpeted areas. We also discussed the need for educating students on proper hand washing techniques and the use of hand sanitizers.” Bronston also stated that, “The symptoms and illness pattern suggest this may be a norovirus outbreak. However, the results of the specimen testing will provide further confirmation.” Norovirus is a very contagious illness that spreads easily from person to person by touching surfaces that are contaminated with the virus. Patty Mead, Health Director, stated, “Since people can spread the illness from the minute they begin feeling ill to three days after recovery, it’s important for them to remember to wash their hands frequently with warm water and soap or use an alcohol based hand sanitizer. This is one of the best ways to reduce transmission of the illness.” As with any illness, individuals should seek medical attention as needed.

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