



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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ADPH closes norovirus outbreak investigation associated with baseball tournament

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Based on the laboratory study of the data, and public health investigation, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) has found that norovirus GII was the most likely cause of an outbreak associated with the Southern States Athletic Conference Baseball Tournament in early May. There are six genotypes of norovirus and norovirus GII is the most common of these viruses to cause outbreaks. Norovirus can spread from person to person which is what appeared to have happened in this outbreak.

An estimated 25 to 30 individuals experienced gastrointestinal illness that included nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cramping and lethargy. The onset of their illnesses occurred from May 2 to May 7.

ADPH distributed a survey to approximately 240 individuals associated with the tournament in Montgomery, and 84 people responded to the survey. Findings based on epidemiologic analysis and laboratory results found the following results:

- Twenty-eight people were ill with vomiting and/or diarrhea.
- Four individuals associated with the tournament and one fan tested positive for norovirus GII. The typical incubation period for norovirus is 12-48 hours.
- One individual had illness preceding a banquet on May 2, and two individuals had illness onset within 9 hours of the banquet, indicating that the banquet was probably not the source of their illness.
- Seven individuals had illness preceding their first game in the tournament, indicating that the field and water coolers were probably not the source of their illness.
- Samples from the water coolers did not test positive for norovirus GII. Foods from the banquet could not be tested for norovirus due to laboratory limitations.

Assistant State Health Officer Dr. Karen Landers said, "We had a good response to the survey. The span of onset times and dates indicated continued transmission, with the banquet and games serving as opportunities to facilitate spread of the virus through contact among teams."