




Voluntary Closure at La Hacienda in Gold Bar Following Norovirus-like Illnesses

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Reminder to notify the Health District who become ill after eating out

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2018

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SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash. – The Snohomish Health District is investigating a small number of people exhibiting norovirus-like symptoms following an off-site training, which included take-out food prepared by La Hacienda located at 101 9th Street in Gold Bar. While it remains unclear if the illness was caused by food, ongoing investigation indicates a higher likelihood that people at the training came into contact with an individual who was already infected with the virus. This can happen with cross-contamination of food by the sharing of utensils, using hands to pick-up food, and inadequate hand-washing. Due to the relatively short duration of symptoms, lab confirmation of the type of illness has not been available. Out of an abundance of caution, La Hacienda elected to voluntarily close the restaurant on Tuesday evening for disinfection and reopened on Wednesday afternoon.

“We value our customers, and their safety is important to us,” said Ramone Lopez, manager at La Hacienda. “We did voluntarily close our Gold Bar location on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning to perform a thorough cleaning, and I’m happy to report that we are now back open for business.”

Restaurants, schools, daycares and other places where large numbers of people come into contact can be prime spots for the germs spread quickly. If you think you got sick after eating in any restaurant or a water source, please contact the Communicable Disease Surveillance line at 425.339.5278.

“This is another example of how prevalent illnesses like norovirus are in everyday life,” said Dr. Mark Beatty, health officer for the Snohomish Health District. “Situations like this can be challenging for businesses and community groups, but we appreciate La Hacienda’s full

cooperation and prompt response.”

Norovirus is a disease that spreads quickly, oftentimes mistakenly called the stomach flu. You can get it or other gastrointestinal illnesses from an infected person, contaminated food or water, or by touching contaminated surfaces.

The virus causes stomach pain, nausea, diarrhea and vomiting because your stomach, intestines or both get inflamed (acute gastroenteritis). Symptoms include:

- A sudden onset of illness, usually 24-48 hours after exposure
- Vomiting and nausea
- Diarrhea and stomach cramps
- Headaches, chills, a low-grade fever, muscle aches and tiredness
- Symptoms lasting for 1-2 days

There are no specific drugs or vaccines to treat or prevent norovirus. However, taking the following precautions will help prevent the spread of the virus:

- Wash hands after using the bathroom
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly
- Do not prepare food for others while sick
- Keep children with symptoms home from school or child care, and notify them of the illness
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces with a solution of bleach and water
- Wash all clothes and linens soiled by vomit or fecal matter immediately

The Snohomish Health District works for a safer and healthier community through disease prevention, health promotion, and protection from environmental threats. To read more about the District and for important health information, visit www.snohd.org.

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