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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NEWS RELEASE

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT REMINDS
THE COMMUNITY TO BE AWARE OF NOROVIRUS**

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL – St. Johns County Health Department reminds residents and visitors to be aware of the symptoms of norovirus (a gastrointestinal illness) and also to take precautions to help prevent its spread. Throughout Florida communities, norovirus and other gastrointestinal illness clusters have been reported in schools, assisted living facilities, long-term care facilities, and correctional facilities.

Norovirus symptoms include the sudden onset of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and some stomach cramping. Some people may also experience low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and a general sense of tiredness. The illness is usually brief, with symptoms lasting only about 1 or 2 days.

While there is no specific treatment for norovirus, it is recommended that infected persons get plenty of rest and drink extra liquids to avoid dehydration. By taking simple, preventative measures, everyone can reduce their chances of coming in contact with noroviruses.

Dr. Dawn Allicock, Director of St. Johns County Health Department, offers the following tips to reduce contact with and the spread of this illness:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Wash your hands well and often.
- Avoid contact with those that may be sick.
- Carefully wash produce prior to eating.
- If sick, avoid handling and preparing food for 3 days after recovering from the illness.
- Regularly clean and disinfect commonly used surfaces and areas (table tops, faucets, doorknobs, toilet seats, etc.) with a bleach-based household cleaner.
- Immediately remove and wash clothing or linens that may be contaminated with the virus after an episode of illness. Be sure to use hot water and soap.

For more information about norovirus, visit the Florida Department of Health's website (http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Disease_ctrl/epi/diseases.htm#N). Additional information can be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website (www.cdc.gov).

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***Our Mission:** Promote, protect and improve the health of all people in Florida.*

***Our Vision:** A healthier future for the people of Florida.*

***Our Values:** - Integrity; Commitment to Service; Respect; Excellence; Accountability; Teamwork; Empowerment –*



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Prevent. Promote. Protect.