



C R E D I T • V A L L E Y
THE CREDIT VALLEY HOSPITAL

Update: Gastrointestinal Illness At Credit Valley

Thursday February 14, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Mississauga, Ontario): Two inpatient units at The Credit Valley Hospital remain closed to new patients and to visitors due to a gastrointestinal outbreak.

To date, only two surgeries (joint replacement) have been cancelled. However, the hospital is reviewing its ability to provide a recovery bed for those surgical patients who require an inpatient stay following their surgery. The review will continue day by day until the outbreak is over.

Patients who have scheduled surgeries at the hospital WILL BE CALLED IF THEIR SURGERY IS TO BE CANCELLED.

The hospital's emergency department, all outpatient clinics and all other patient units (other than 3B and 1D) are open to patients and visitors.

To date, 21 patients on the closed units have gastrointestinal illness. Twelve staff are also off sick.

The hospital has established a public information line at **905-813-3330** that will be updated as new information becomes available as will the hospital's website at www.cvh.on.ca. A handwashing video is available online that shows proper handwashing techniques.

Gastrointestinal illnesses, often called stomach flu, are passed in the stool and vomit of infected persons. Proper hand hygiene is imperative to prevent the spread of the illness.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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WHAT IS VIRAL GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS (also called the “ Stomach Flu“)?

Viral gastrointestinal illnesses are passed in the stool and vomit of infected persons.

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

Anyone can get the virus by direct contact with an infected person or by coming in contact with objects contaminated by an infected person. This type of gastrointestinal illness is usually spread by touching infected material and transferring the virus to your mouth.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, and sometimes fever.

HOW SERIOUS IS IT?

At this time of year, it is normal for healthcare facilities to experience a few isolated staff and patient cases of viral gastroenteritis. While the virus does not cause severe illness, people whose health is already compromised are likely to be more affected. That is why it is very important to prevent the spread of the virus in hospitals.

WHAT IS THE TREATMENT?

This type of illness usually lasts for about two days. Treatment includes plenty of fluids, rest and isolation of patients with symptoms. It is important to know that patients are contagious for 48 hours after their symptoms stop.

HOW CAN I HELP?

The best way to protect yourself from getting sick is by practicing good hand washing and hygiene. If you develop symptoms, please do not visit the hospital until you are better. If you have any concerns about how you are feeling, you should consult your family physician.

People who are ill should try to avoid preparing or handling food for others. Whenever possible, they should also use a separate bathroom.

More information on the various forms of gastrointestinal illness is available by contacting the Region of Peel’s Public Health Department at (905) 799-7700. If community members have any concerns, they should contact their family physician or the local health department.

WHAT IS THE HOSPITAL DOING TO CONTROL THE SPREAD OF THE VIRUS?

We have taken the necessary steps to help avoid spread of the virus, including isolating patients who are experiencing symptoms and treating their symptoms. Our Infection Prevention and Control team is monitoring all areas of the hospital. We have communicated information to families and visitors throughout the hospital asking them not to visit if they are ill.

IF A UNIT IS CLOSED DUE TO AN OUTBREAK, WHEN WILL IT BE RE-OPENED?

The virus is contagious for 48 hours after the symptoms stop. A unit is re-opened when there have been no new cases for a minimum of three consecutive days. We will continue to provide updates on any situation at the hospital.

**Prepared by: Community Relations and Infection Prevention & Control
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