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Norwalk virus hits Woodland

Wednesday, December 29, 2004 Natalie Miller

Woodland Villa was walloped before Christmas by an outbreak of the Norwalk virus.

More than 90 residents and staff members experienced symptoms of the gastrointestinal virus. Management at the 111-bed Long Sault long-term care home advised family members to stay away until the outbreak was over. The Norwalk virus was confirmed Dec. 13 after a person fell ill the day before.

"It's a bad time of year, of course," says Debbie Kitchen, director of care, referring to the holiday season.

Woodland cancelled its entertainment for the month and had to turn away about 60 family members from the Christmas dinner. However, Woodland held a Christmas party for well residents and administrator Jean Marc Lanoue dressed as Santa Claus.

Fortunately, says Debbie, the virus lasts just 48 hours. Residents who were ill were given fluids only for the first day and a 'Bratt' diet, consisting of bananas, rice, apple sauce, tea and toast, the following two days.

Debbie says staff members have been supportive during the outbreak. "Everybody pitches in."

The housekeeping department brought in extra staff for additional cleaning duties like wiping down doorknobs, handrails and toilet seats, twice a day. Staff is also using Virox, a cleaning agent effective against Norwalk, says Debbie.

Frequent handwashing and the use of

Isagel, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, are being encouraged, she adds.

Dec. 23 was the home's first day without any new cases. "We need seven days with no new cases then you can declare the outbreak over," says Debbie.

In an effort to bring you independent news about the OMNI community, this story was prepared by a third party news provider, [Axiom News Services](#). It has not been subject to prior editorial approval by OMNI Health Care.

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