



Health Department News

Gastrointestinal illness outbreak investigation ongoing

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The McHenry County Department of Health has closed its illness outbreak survey linked to D.C. Cobb's, 1204 N. Green Street in McHenry, and is continuing its gastrointestinal illness outbreak investigation.

After sharing the illness outbreak investigation survey on Tuesday, MCDH received 508 completed survey responses. MCDH would like to thank everyone who completed the survey for their assistance in the investigation.

The data collected from the survey and individual interviews is being analyzed to determine the scope and cause of the outbreak including whether any food items are the likely source of the illness and to identify other risk factors that contributed to the spread. Stool specimens are being collected from ill individuals to be tested to identify the type of pathogen that led to the illness.

MCDH staff is conducting a food analysis using the data collected from the survey. The food analysis involves looking at the foods that ill and well individuals ate to determine the likelihood that someone became ill after eating a particular food item. It is not always possible to determine a single food item during an outbreak investigation. This can happen if multiple food items led to the spread of illness or if there is not enough information to determine the cause of illness.

MCDH initially launched an investigation after receiving a call from the owner of the food establishment and a complaint of potential illness from individuals who had eaten at the restaurant five to seven days earlier. MCDH Environmental Health has been working with the food establishment owner since the start of the investigation and continues to provide guidance and updates to the owner who is fully cooperating.

The MCDH is advising anyone who ate food prepared at the food establishment and is experiencing severe illness to seek medical attention.