

# Norovirus outbreak at Sushi Nine officially considered closed

December 18, 2023

Wake County Public Health and Wake County Environmental Services report that the norovirus outbreak linked to a local Raleigh sushi restaurant is now closed. An outbreak in a facility may be declared over if no new illnesses have occurred after two incubation periods of six days, with no new complaints or cases reported.

“We received the first complaint on Friday, Dec. 1,” said Susan Evans, vice chair, Wake County Board of Commissioners. “Wake County Public Health and Environmental Services immediately responded and initiated the investigation. We interviewed everyone who reached out to us with complaints and are working to evaluate the information they provided.”

In total, Wake County received 242 complaints, and all of those diners reported visiting Sushi Nine restaurant between Saturday, Nov. 28, and Tuesday, Dec. 5.

They were asked to give stool samples, the only way to lab test for norovirus. Three people have provided samples so far, and all three came back positive for norovirus. The restaurant voluntarily closed on Tuesday, Dec. 5, and reopened on Friday, Dec. 8, to allow for thorough cleaning and disinfecting following CDC guidance, employee health and education. No additional complaints were received after the restaurant reopened.

The cause of the outbreak has not yet been identified. The investigation is still ongoing, and staff is evaluating the collected information. However, it is common with norovirus outbreaks to not be able to identify the exact cause.

Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that causes acute vomiting and diarrhea. The most common symptoms are vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and stomach cramps. Norovirus can spread easily from person to person through contaminated food or water or by touching contaminated surfaces. Typically, a person is contagious as soon as they begin feeling sick and remains contagious until a few days after they recover.

Norovirus causes an estimated 19–21 million illnesses each year in the United States.

To reduce the risk of getting or spreading norovirus infection:

- Practice good handwashing techniques using soap and water; hand sanitizers are not usually effective against norovirus.
- Use safe food-handling techniques, such as washing fruits and vegetables and cooking shellfish thoroughly.

- If you're sick, STAY HOME! Isolate yourself and do not participate in group activities until after you recover.
- Do NOT prepare food or care for others when you are sick with norovirus or any diarrheal illness.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces or objects with bleach as soon as possible.

Wake County still encourages anyone who visited this restaurant between Wednesday, Nov. 28, through Monday, Dec. 5, to monitor themselves for symptoms and seek medical care with their primary care physician or primary care clinic if serious symptoms occur.

Anyone who visited the restaurant during this timeframe and became sick is encouraged to call Wake County Public Health at 919-250-1029, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.