

Norovirus-like illness associated with Taste ToGo Banh Mi in Kent

AT-A-GLANCE

- **Cases:** 7
- **Hospitalizations:** 0
- **Deaths:** 0
- **Status:** Investigation is in progress
- **Location:** Taste ToGo Banh Mi, 18230 E Valley Hwy #153, Kent, WA 98032
- **Meal dates:** February 26, 2023
- **Current inspection rating:** Needs to Improve

Highlights

Update March 3, 2023

Summary

Public Health is investigating an outbreak of norovirus-like illness associated with vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and chills at Taste ToGo Banh Mi in Kent. We have not identified how norovirus was spread within the restaurant. This is not uncommon for norovirus outbreaks, because the virus can spread through multiple contaminated food items, environmental surfaces, and from person to person.

Illnesses

Seven people from 1 meal party reported becoming ill after purchasing food from Taste ToGo Banh Mi on February 26, 2023. The food was eaten on February 27, 2023, and all members of the meal party developed one or more symptoms consistent with norovirus-like illness, including vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, and chills.

We identified one ill employee who reported symptoms consistent with norovirus who worked on February 26 and 27, 2023.

Public Health actions

These illnesses were reported on March 2, 2023. Environmental Health Investigators visited the restaurant on March 3, 2023. Investigators identified inadequate access to hand washing facilities. The restaurant closed the same day to complete a thorough cleaning and disinfection.

Environmental Health Investigators will revisit the facility on Monday, March 6, 2023, to ensure proper compliance with food handling practices. The restaurant will reopen after reinspection and approval by Environmental Health.

Investigators reviewed with restaurant management the requirement that ill staff are not allowed to work until they are symptom-free for at least 48 hours and provided education about preventing the spread of norovirus — including proper handwashing and preventing bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods.

Laboratory testing

We do not have laboratory testing for the people who got sick. Often in norovirus outbreaks, no laboratory testing is done because people tend to get better within a day or two. Symptoms among those who got sick are suggestive of norovirus-like illness.