

New Jersey's

Monmouth County

*The Place You Want to Be*



Department of Public  
Information & Tourism

Laura Kirkpatrick  
lkirkpat@co.monmouth.nj.us

Phone: (732) 431-7310

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## **County Health Dept. investigates intestinal illness**

FREEHOLD, NJ – Due to an increase in recent reports of gastrointestinal illnesses, Monmouth County Health Department encourages adults and children to stay home if ill and to be diligent about hand washing especially after using the bathroom and before eating.

In the past week, Monmouth County has seen an increase in cases of gastrointestinal (GI) illnesses. The symptoms include: abdominal cramping, nausea, and vomiting lasting twenty four to forty eight hours.

Those with symptoms should stay home for 24 hours after symptoms have stopped to avoid spreading the virus to others. People involved in a food handling occupation should stay home 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

“The best way to protect yourself from GI illness is to practice proper hand washing and general cleanliness,” said Christopher Merkel, Monmouth County Public Health Coordinator. “Contrary to popular opinion, hand sanitizers are not effective in protecting you from this type of illness. Soap and water is the best and most effective way to reduce the likelihood you will get a GI illness.”

Efforts are being made to identify the specific illness through laboratory testing.

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