

Gastroenteritis

10 top tips for outbreaks

- 1 Take action**
When you have **three or more sick children or staff with similar symptoms in seven days**, visit our early childhood centre page www.healthyecc.org.nz – current illness.
- 2 Be in control**
If the number of people sick reaches **15% or more of the total centre roll (including staff)**, please contact a Health Protection Officer by email on healthprotection@huttvalleydhb.org.nz or phone on (04) 570 9002. We can give you a fresh perspective.

 - **To calculate % of people sick:**
Number of people sick (children & staff) ÷ total centre roll x 100 = % of people sick
- 3 Protect others**
Isolate and send sick children home. Keep sick children and staff away from the centre until they have been **free of symptoms for at least 48 hours**.
- 4 Share the load**
Communicate with parents and caregivers about the illness at the centre. Provide a factsheet/letter. Ask parents to inform the centre of their child's absence and symptoms; even if child is not due to attend the centre.
- 5 Keep it clean**
Increase daily cleaning. Clean first then sanitise frequently used areas (e.g. bathrooms, tables, etc) and 'high touch' surfaces (e.g. door handles) regularly during the day and at the end of the day. Also inform your cleaners and check they are also using bleach.
- 6 Bleach blitz**
Replace cleaning products with bleach/chlorine products. Make a **new bleach solution daily** using **either** of the following formulas:

 - Make a **bleach solution at 1:10 ratio** (1 part bleach and 9 parts water) or,
 - To make 1 litre = 50ml of bleach and add water to make 1 litre or,
¼ cup of bleach and add 4 cups of water
 - To make **10 litres** = 500ml (2 cups) of bleach and add water to make 10 litres
- 7 Safe play**
Wash and sanitise toys daily. Reduce and rotate toys. Remove play dough and discontinue water play and baking activities.
- 8 Hands, hands, hands**
Ask all staff, parents and children to **wash their hands on arrival at centre** - alcohol gel can be used at the door for parents. Supervised hand washing of children after using the toilet and before and after eating is recommended. Hand washing with soap and water is more effective than using alcohol gels alone.
- 9 Protect yourself**
Staff should wear disposal personal protective equipment (PPE) including masks, gloves and plastic apron when cleaning up vomit or diarrhoea. Throw out after use.
- 10 Neutralise nasties**
Do not rinse/soak soiled clothing and cloth nappies. Double bag and store out of reach of children. Advise parents that care should be taken when opening the bag to not breathe in viral particles released from the bag.

If you need additional information contact the Early Childhood Centres team on 027 807 8544.