

Foodborne illness outbreaks most often involve norovirus

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Foodborne illness outbreaks most commonly involve norovirus,

according to research published in the June 2 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

Erin D. Moritz, Ph.D., from the CDC in Atlanta, and colleagues summarized environmental health data collected during foodborne illness outbreak investigations and reported to the National Environmental Assessment Reporting System (NEARS) during 2017 to 2019.

A total of 800 [foodborne illness outbreaks](#) associated with 875 retail food establishments were reported to NEARS during 2017 to 2019 by 25 state and local health departments. The researchers found that 69.4 percent of the outbreaks with a confirmed or suspected agent involved norovirus and Salmonella, accounting for 47.0 and 18.6 percent, respectively. Of the outbreaks with identified contributing factors, about 40 percent had at least one factor associated with [food contamination](#) by an ill or infectious food worker.

In 679 outbreaks, an establishment manager was interviewed; 91.7 percent of those said that their establishment had a policy requiring food workers to notify the manager when they were ill; 66.0 percent of these policies were written. Only 23.0 percent said that all five illness symptoms workers needed to notify managers about were listed (vomiting, diarrhea, jaundice, [sore throat](#) with fever, and lesion with pus).

"The findings in this [report](#) can help public health authorities and the retail food establishment industry develop data-driven, effective approaches to preventing foodborne illness outbreaks," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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