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Local Hospitals Seeing Rise in Summer Stomach Illness

By Geena Martinez
NewsWest 9



ODESSA - Cold and flu is far behind us but the number of people getting sick doesn't seem to be changing. Local hospitals are seeing a number of patients coming in with an illness that really can't be treated.

We've been getting a few calls into our newsroom about a stomach bug that's going around.

Some of you were concerned because you weren't really sure what it was.

Stomach bug, parasite, virus. Whatever you want to call it, right now doctors are seeing more patients with it.

"We are seeing several cases," Sudip Bose, M.D., said. "We do see some in the winter months and some in the summer months and unfortunately when that bug gets out, it spreads."

Dr. Bose is an emergency medicine physician at Medical Center Hospital in Odessa.

He said there's been an increase in cases involving a stomach illness that looks like the flu but it isn't.

"Somehow the bug has to get into the intestinal tract," he said. "If it's not through bad food, it can be through exposure in other ways."

Dr. Bose said sharing utensils, playing outside and even using public restrooms are ways to contract the illness.

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, stomach cramps and diarrhea. Once you get it, there's really not much you can do about it.

"For the most part, it's a virus, its going to run its course and there really is no magic therapy," Dr. Bose said.

That's why many viewers called the NewsWest 9 newsroom with concerns, but Dr. Bose explains, "If someone has a bacterial infection, that works well" he said. "If you give antibiotics for viruses, that can cause more harm."

Staying hydrated is key to getting past the illness.

Despite the rise in patients coming into the hospital with this new stomach bug, Dr. Bose said there's no need for alarm.

"A lot of times you can just take care of this at home on your own," he said. "The main thing is rather than getting to a point where you need to get it fixed, try to prevent. Wash your hands and wash them well."

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