

Illness Outbreak Investigated

Local News

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State and local health officials are investigating a possible intestinal illness outbreak among attendees of a cheerleading competition in Everett last weekend. Thousands of people attended the event at Everett's Comcast Arena on February 4; onset of symptoms reportedly began on February 5 and 6. Symptoms include vomiting and diarrhea. The Washington State Department of Health is working closely with the Snohomish Health District on the investigation. The cause and source of the illnesses, as well as the total number of people sickened, are unknown. Teams and supporters from around the state participated. The investigation is in the early stages and includes sending a questionnaire to participants as well as collecting samples for testing at the state Public Health Laboratories. People who attended the event and have severe symptoms are advised to contact a health care provider. According to the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA), which hosted the event, more than 3,000 people attended, and more than 1,000 competed in the State Cheerleading and Salute to Spirit in cheer and dance/drill. Our immediate concerns are for those who have been affected by this illness and our thoughts are with them. The WIAA appreciates the cooperation of Comcast Arena and of state and local health partners for addressing the entire scope of this situation. - WIAA Executive Director Mike Colbresi

Intestinal illnesses can be caused by several viruses and bacteria that may come from a wide variety of sources. Symptoms typically include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and may include headaches, stomach cramps, and fever. As with many illnesses, good personal hygiene such as frequent hand washing is an important tool to prevent the spread of disease.