



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH,  
WELLNESS AND THE  
ENVIRONMENT**

**Ministerial Building, Kingstown,  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, October 4, 2022

Contact: Permanent Secretary

*Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines*

### **Increased Cases of Gastroenteritis In SVG**

Over the past few weeks, the Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment has recorded an increase in the number of gastroenteritis cases.

Acute gastroenteritis is an inflammation of the stomach and the intestines and may be caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites among others. Gastroenteritis is spread by direct contact with an infected person, by consuming contaminated food or water or by touching contaminated surfaces then putting your unwashed hands in your mouth.

Symptoms of gastroenteritis include vomiting which may or may not be accompanied by diarrhea, stomach pain and fever. In most cases, gastroenteritis is a self-limiting illness, however children and the elderly are most susceptible to complications such as dehydration and should therefore be monitored closely. Signs of dehydration include decreased urination, dry mouth, crying with few or no tears or feeling drowsy or sleepy.

To prevent the spread of gastroenteritis, persons are asked to:

- Practice good hand hygiene by washing hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water, especially after vomiting or after a bowel movement and before meals.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly before consumption
- Sanitize surfaces and objects frequently to eliminate the virus/bacteria. It is recommended that when sanitizing, you use 1tsp bleach to 2 cups of water.
- Avoid going to work/school until the symptoms have passed if you are vomiting or have diarrhea.
- Avoid sharing cutlery or utensils.

Persons are asked to please seek medical attention at their nearest Health Centres if their condition does not improve or if there are signs of dehydration.

The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment thanks the public for its continued support and will continue to put measures in place to monitor and address the increasing cases of gastroenteritis.

For more information, please contact the Office of the Chief Medical Officer or the Epidemiology Unit at 457-2586.

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