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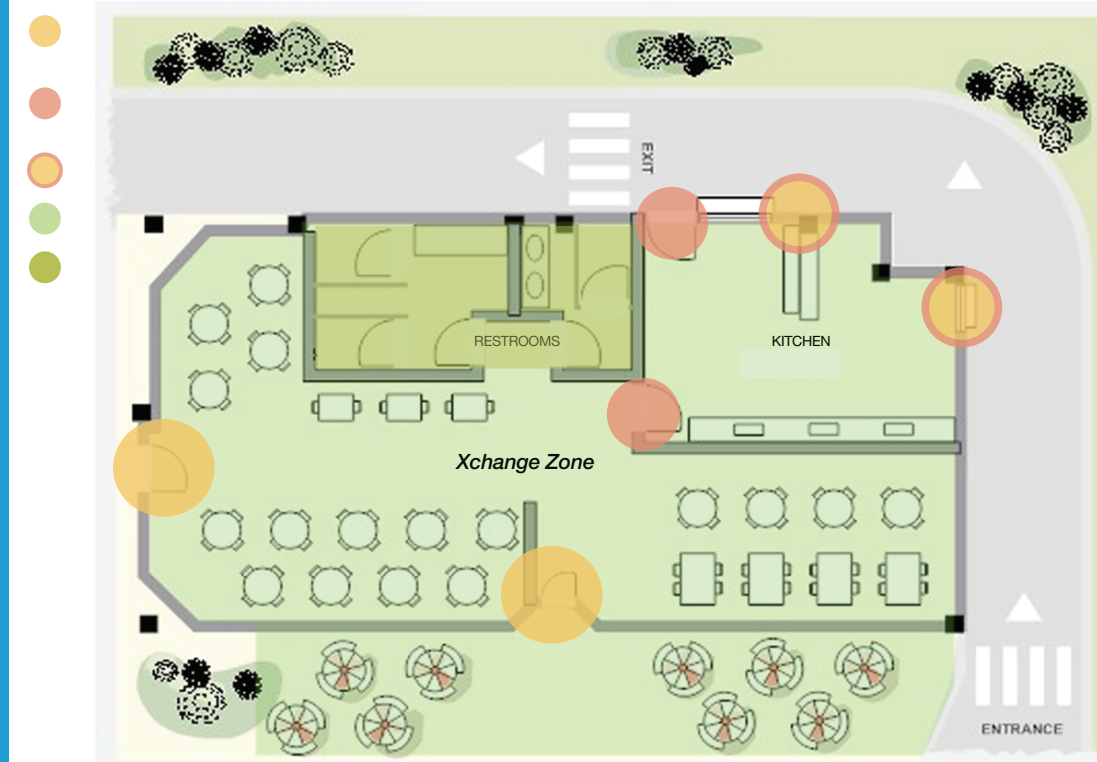
An Alliance to Lower the Risk of Foodborne Illness

Handwashing For Life®
endorses and advocates the
Best Practice leadership
of these companies who
have demonstrated their
commitment and willingness
to work together to
lower operator risk.

**Poor hand
hygiene is
the #1 cited
contributing
factor in
foodborne
outbreaks and
norovirus is
the #1 predator.**

Jim Mann,
Handwashing For Life Institute

II/Contaminated Customer
Intervention Zone
II/Contaminated Employee
Intervention Zone
Two-way Intervention Zone
Xchange Zone
Prime Xchange Zone



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Outsmarting Outbreaks Controlling the Customer Contact Factor in Norovirus Risks

Both customers and employees of any foodservice operation unwittingly open the door for norovirus everyday, every shift. This pathogen prefers people and enjoys the generous hand-to-hand transportation into and all around the restaurant. Keeping a restaurant norovirus-free would require keeping customers and employees out.

But with new interventions and systems, the everyday noro-war is well worth waging, protecting the customers, the staff and the business itself. Handwashing still ranks as the best intervention and now soap dispensers are available with electronic counters to help monitor safe-level standards of compliance.

An assessment of foot traffic yields a view of the hand traffic: hand-to-hand, hand-to-surface & surface-to-hand. This perspective helps weigh the risk potential as the hand traffic splices into the food flow, multiplying the risk, particularly for norovirus. New synergistic alcohol hand sanitizers make an excellent choice in critical norovirus intersections.

Norovirus loves living with many of its microbial neighbors in the human gut. It is released, usually after severe cramping, often with a seemingly atomic force. While the initial explosion is usually in a toilet, either at home or perhaps in the restaurant, norovirus finds its way out of the stall and into the mouths of unsuspecting diners. The primary route of norovirus contamination is described as fecal-hand-oral. Norovirus can live on inanimate “transfer” surfaces for weeks and continue its journey thanks to a relay team of careless people. Clean restrooms are important on so many levels as they are the primary Xchange Zone – the norovirus relay starts here.

Norovirus is 30 nanometers in size, far below levels of sight and touch, two of the more common conditions triggering a cleaning cycle. ATP (Adenosine Tri Phosphate) technology can now help operators set surface cleaning cycles and maintain safe standards without the delays of lab culturing. Swabs and a hand-held luminometer provide surface cleanliness readings in 25 seconds.

Translating Cruise Line Lessons to Casual Dining

Cruise ships have become international “laboratories” for the study of norovirus. Norovirus loves the cruising crowd. Here human norovirus is readily available for study by their “health inspectors” - the CDC’s Vessel Sanitation group. They have in-depth proof that most all their outbreaks are traced back to guests, not staff.

Luckily, there are two very big differences between a cruise line’s foodservice and a terra firma restaurant;

1. The restaurant patron goes home to get sick, leaving most foodborne illness unreported, while on a cruise ship, the stateroom takes the hit and an outbreak is nurtured.
2. Due to the ship’s port of registry, cruise lines are not a subject of Marler Clark’s legal focus while the state registered restaurant is fully exposed to the critical legal principle of Strict Liability: He who serves illness-causing contaminated food is liable.

Norovirus risk can be greatly reduced by designs which outsmart outbreaks.

Norovirus cruises comfortably around busy restaurants. Its port of departure is either a restaurant’s own toilet, someone’s home bathroom or perhaps the restroom at some other away-from-home source. Schools, offices and hospitals are common norovirus harbors.

Waging war on norovirus in restaurants starts with setting up blockades between the microbes and the human “macrobes.” Convenience is mission critical. Weaponry must be at-the-ready whether it’s handwashing, hand sanitizing, gloving or keeping surfaces safe to touch.

This blockade system pictured below, matches the owner’s priority of food safety in a way that can be implemented and sustained. See Handwashing For Life’s Hands-On System including the SurfaceSafe program to assess, build and monitor your system based on your own Safe Level standards.

Norovirus Risks

Note:
Use Handwashing For Life’s 5 Step Hands-On System to assess risk annually, set/modify performance standards and to monitor for enduring success.

Go to:
handwashingforlife.com
for information on accessing the Hands-On Implementation Manual. (A site-based fee applies.)

Poor hand hygiene is the #1 cited contributor to foodborne outbreaks. Lower your risk by raising hand hygiene standards.

Handwashing is the single most important means of preventing the spread of infection.
Centers for Disease Control

