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Stomach bug hits school's spouses

Spouses of teachers at PS 7 in Brooklyn also have gotten sick with a stomach illness resulting in cramps, vomiting and diarrhea, Schools Chancellor Harold Levy said yesterday.

The city Heath Department is investigating the virus-like symptoms that hit 78 students and five staff members at the Cypress Hills school last week.

"I heard that the spouses of faculty members are reporting similar symptoms," Levy said.

Levy said the outbreak may be from a virus, but he is awaiting the results of the health probe.

"Of course I'm concerned," Levy said.

He said it's not uncommon for students in a school to come down with the same cold or virus, but added, "We're more focused on this because it's a large number. It's more than the usual."

United Federation of Teachers spokesman Ron Davis said the spouses of two teachers have been infected.

A rumor circulating at the school is that people contracted the Norwalk virus, which results from swallowing contaminated food or water. It's often linked to raw clams.

But the Health Department did not confirm Norwalk was the culprit.

A department spokesman said investigators interviewed 115 people from the school over the weekend to try to pinpoint the cause. *Carl Campanile*

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