

## Royal Caribbean cruise ship delays departure after illness outbreak

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By [Gene Sloan](#), USA TODAY

The year's first big outbreak of illness on a cruise ship has taken place on a Royal Caribbean vessel, Radiance of the Seas, causing a slight delay to its current voyage. The line reported 150 of 2,336 passengers on the Jan. 3 sailing of the ship were struck by a gastro-intestinal illness marked by diarrhea and vomiting. Three crew members also were reported ill.

The five-night voyage ended in Tampa on Saturday, and the Radiance remained in the port five hours longer than normal to

undergo a ship-wide cleaning before the current sailing of the ship began.

Such outbreaks are relatively rare when put into context of the thousands of sailings on major ships each year, and have been on the decline in recent years as the industry steps up prevention efforts.

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The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta recorded just 14 outbreaks of illnesses on cruise ships operating out of U.S. ports in 2010, down from 15 in 2009 and in 2008, 21 in 2007 and 34 in 2006.

Cruise ships arriving in U.S. ports must report all cases of gastrointestinal illness treated by on-board medical staff to the CDC's Vessel Sanitation Program division, and a separate notification is required when the number of cases exceeds 2% of passengers and crew. When the number of cases exceeds 3% of passengers and crew the CDC issues a public report.



CAPTION

By Paul Whyte, USA TODAY