

Resources

More information on preventing norovirus contamination, proper home and hand hygiene, and other related topics can be found online at:

Center for Health & Hygiene in the Home and Community
www.simmons.edu/hygieneandhealth

Centers for Disease Control
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus-factsheet.htm>

Hand Washing for Better Health
<http://www.simmons.edu/hygieneandhealth/Handwashing%20Tips.pdf>

Norovirus Infections in Home and Community Settings
<http://www.simmons.edu/hygieneandhealth/>



*Center for
Health & Hygiene
in the Home & Community*

The Center for Health and Hygiene in the Home and Community serves as a national and international resource for information and education, applied research, professional training and conferences. The Center focuses on issues relating to hygiene and infection control in areas such as:

- consumer food safety
- home hygiene
- daycare
- preschool
- homecare
- sports and leisure activity
- travel and hospitality

Simmons College
300 The Fenway
Boston, MA 02115
www.simmons.edu/hygieneandhealth

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Community*

Norovirus: Infection
Prevention



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Noroviruses are the most common cause of gastroenteritis, often called the “stomach flu”. The norovirus is highly infectious and can even survive on dry surfaces for up to 7 days. Home and community settings are common locations for norovirus outbreaks.

Symptoms

- Severe, projectile vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Fever
- Aching limbs
- General tiredness



~Symptoms usually last 24-60 hours~

How The Virus Spreads

Contact with an infected person is the greatest source of risk for infection.

- Person-to-person contact via airborne particles that land on surfaces as a result of vomiting.
- Swallowing airborne particles after they enter the nasal passages.
- Food-borne spread through contamination by infected food handler
- Wherever people gather closely together in indoor settings there is a risk of an outbreak: homes, hospitals, workplaces, schools/colleges, hotels, and vacation settings.

Infection Prevention

The best line of defense against noroviruses are effective hygiene practices, including hand hygiene, surface sanitation and food safety.

Hygiene in the Home

- When cleaning, pay particular attention to surfaces in the bathroom: washbasins, tubs, toilet seats, toilet handles, and showers.
- Other important surfaces are those that come into contact with hands: door handles, telephones, bedside table, bed frames, computer keyboards, and TV remote controls.
- Use a disinfectant cleaner, such as a bleach-based product, for the target surfaces mentioned above. To be effective, dilute concentrated household bleach to 5000 parts per million (ppm) available chlorine, typically a 1 in 10 dilution.
- Make an easy sanitizing agent by mixing ½ cup of bleach per 1 gallon of water.
- Products labeled as "antibacterial" are not active against norovirus. Always check the label.
- Rags and sponges can spread the norovirus. Use paper towels or disposable rags during outbreaks.
- If floors or other surfaces become contaminated with feces or vomit, they should be cleaned at once. Protect yourself by using gloves and by wearing a dust mask to prevent inhalation of airborne particles.
- If possible, after cleaning up vomit, vacate and ventilate the room by opening a window.
- Dispose of contaminated materials in a plastic bag, making sure to tie the top shut.



Personal Hygiene

- Good hand washing practice is the single most important infection control measure.

- See “Resources” section on front of brochure for more information on proper hand washing.

Safe Food Practices

- Infected individuals should stay away from the kitchen and should not prepare food for others.
- Reheat food to 140°F or 60°C to destroy the virus.
- Wash and sanitize hands before eating and after handling raw foods.
- Cook foods thoroughly.
- Wash any foods such as fruits and vegetables to be eaten raw thoroughly under clean running water.

If Infected

- Hydrate with fluids, juice, and water.
- Isolate yourself during the vomiting phase of the illness to prevent spreading the virus.
- Do not share towels, toothbrushes, clothing, sheets, and pillows.
- Stay home from work and school for a minimum of 3 days after symptoms have subsided.
- Medical attention may be required for the young, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals in order to prevent dehydration and complications.

Treatment

Norovirus infection cannot be treated with antibiotics and, at this time, is no vaccination available. In the absence of a cure or treatment, prevention of infections is critical.