

A Healthier You

Norovirus Prevention



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

What is Norovirus?

- A viral infection
- The most common cause of diarrhea and vomiting sickness in the United States



Who Can Get Norovirus?

- Any person of any age group can become infected
- Norovirus occurs mainly in humans and is found in every part of the world
- There are many strains of Norovirus; This makes it hard for the body to develop immunity to the virus



How is Norovirus Spread?

Norovirus is spread by:

- Infected people
- Contaminated food and water
- The virus is found in stool and vomit

You may get Norovirus if you:

- Eat food or drink liquids that have been contaminated with Norovirus
- Touch surfaces or objects contaminated with Norovirus and then place your hands in your mouth
- Have direct contact with another person infected with Norovirus who has diarrhea or is vomiting



What are the Symptoms?

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Watery, non-bloody diarrhea
- Stomach Cramps
- Low grade fever may also occur

How Soon After Exposure do Symptoms Usually Appear?

- Symptoms often start suddenly and the infected person may feel very sick
- Most people will begin to have symptoms within 12 to 48 hours
- Some people may become ill as early as 10 hours or as late as 3 days

Do Symptoms Last Long?

- Anyone sick with Norovirus may be infectious (can pass the illness onto others) for up to 72 hours
- Persons with Norovirus usually recover within 2 to 3 days without serious or long-term health effects.
- Even though the virus is easy to spread, serious illness rarely occurs.
- Contact your health care provider if your symptoms are severe, become worse or do not go away

**Stay home if ill with vomiting
or diarrhea!**

**Do not go to work or school
until 72 hours after
symptoms go away.**



What is the Treatment for Norovirus?

- Norovirus is treated by taking care of the symptoms
- Drink plenty of clear fluids. Extra care should be taken for the very young and the elderly not to become dehydrated during illness
- There is no vaccine for Norovirus
- Antibiotics should NOT be used

If Someone has Norovirus, Can They Get It Again?

- Norovirus infection only gives short-term immunity.
- A person may get sick each time he/she comes in contact with Norovirus.

How Can Norovirus be Prevented?

To reduce the risk of getting or spreading Norovirus:

- Wash hands thoroughly after each toilet visit
- Wash hands thoroughly before preparing food
- Wash fruits and vegetables
- Cook shellfish such as oysters and clams before eating them
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces immediately after an episode of illness by using a bleach-based household cleaner
- Remove and wash clothing or linens that are soiled with stool or vomit.
- Flush or discard any vomit and/or stool in the toilet and make sure that the surrounding area is kept clean.



Handwashing With Soap and Water is Important in Prevention!

- Wash hands thoroughly by lathering with soap and water for 20 seconds after using the restroom, after changing diapers, and before eating or preparing food
- Wash hands before and after direct contact with someone who is ill
- Practice good personal hygiene when handling food

Also:

- Clean and sanitize countertops and hard contact surfaces with a dilute bleach solution
- Wash clothing or linens soiled with vomit or feces in hot water and bleach. Dry on the hottest dryer setting.

Looking for More Information?

- Contact your health care provider
- Visit Somerset County Department of Health's website at www.co.somerset.nj.us/health
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at 1-800-CDC-INFO or search for information at <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/Norovirus/>