

NOROVIRUS FACT SHEET

What is norovirus?

Norovirus is a very contagious virus that can infect anyone. You can get it from an infected person, contaminated food or water, or by touching contaminated surfaces. The virus causes your stomach or intestines or both to get inflamed. This leads to stomach pain, nausea, diarrhea and vomiting. These symptoms can be serious for some people, especially young children and older adults.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- Stomach pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Low-grade fever, chills and headaches
- Dehydration

Signs of dehydration include:

- Decrease in urination
- Dry mouth and throat
- Feeling dizzy when standing up

Children with dehydration may cry without tears and be unusually fussy or sleepy.

Symptoms usually begin 12-48 hours after exposure. Symptoms last 1-3 days.

How can it be prevented?

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Hand sanitizer does NOT WORK well against norovirus. Handwashing is best.
- Flush **any** vomit or stool in the toilet and clean the surrounding area with a bleach-based household cleaner as directed on the product label.
- Do **NOT** prepare food while you have symptoms *and* for 3 days after recovery. Any food that may have been prepared by someone infected **MUST** be thrown away.
- ALWAYS wash fruits and vegetables.

How is it spread?

- By eating food, drinking liquids, touching surfaces or objects that are contaminated with norovirus
- By having direct contact with someone who is infected and has symptoms
- By eating raw or undercooked oysters from contaminated waters

Norovirus can be found in the stool (poop) or vomit of an infected person. It only takes a very small amount of virus to make you sick.

People can be contagious from the moment they become ill to at least 3 days after recovery.

How is it treated?

- There is no antiviral medication or vaccine.
- It cannot be treated with antibiotics.
- Drink clear liquids and avoid alcoholic and caffeinated drinks.
- **For children**, an oral rehydration fluid, such as Pedialyte, can be used to prevent dehydration.

More Information: <http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/about/index.html>

This FACT SHEET is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a healthcare provider. For more information call your healthcare provider.

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