

## Norovirus

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Norovirus is a group of viruses that cause inflammation of the stomach and large intestinal lining. Norovirus is also known as stomach flu, food poisoning, and the winter vomiting bug. Norovirus is the most common cause of acute gastroenteritis effecting 19-21 million people each year. Additionally, each year, norovirus causes 56,000 to 71,000 hospitalizations and 570 to 800 deaths –mostly in young children and the elderly.

### Symptoms

Symptoms of norovirus include diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, stomach pain, fever, headache, and body aches. Children, older adults, and people with other illnesses are especially susceptible to dehydration when suffering from the symptoms of norovirus. Symptoms of dehydration include decreased urination, dry mouth and throat, and feeling dizzy when standing up. Children that are dehydrated may cry with few or no tears and can be unusually sleepy or fussy.



### Transmission

Norovirus is highly contagious and is spread when people eat food or drink liquids that are contaminated, touch contaminated surfaces, care for people with norovirus, and share food or eating utensils with someone who has norovirus. The leading cause of norovirus outbreaks occur when infected workers touch foods with their bare hands before serving them and from foods such as oysters, fruits, and vegetables, that are contaminated at the source. Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), norovirus is able to live on surfaces from days to weeks.

### Preventing the Spread of Norovirus

- Practice proper hand hygiene. Always wash your hands with soap and water before eating, preparing, or handling food.
- Wash fruits and vegetables and cook seafood thoroughly before eating. Norovirus is relatively resistant and can survive temperatures as high as 140°F.

- Do not prepare foods or care for others for at least 2-3 days after recovering from norovirus.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces with a disinfectant registered as effective against norovirus by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or a bleach solution with a concentration of 1000-5000 ppm (5-25 tablespoons of household bleach) per gallon of water.
- Immediately wash clothing or linens that may be contaminated with vomit or stool. Wear disposable gloves and handle soiled items carefully to ensure they are not agitated. Wash hands immediately after removing gloves for at least 20 seconds; scrubbing the back of your hands, in-between fingers, and under your nails.

## FIGHT GERMS BY WASHING YOUR HANDS!



**1** Wet your hands



**2** Soap



**3** Lather and scrub - 20 sec



**4** Rinse - 10 sec



**5** Turn off tap



**6** Dry your hands

**DONT FORGET TO WASH:**

- between your fingers
- under your nails
- the tops of your hands