

Norovirus

What are noroviruses?

Norovirus is a virus that causes the “stomach flu,” or vomiting and diarrhea, in people.

What are the symptoms of illness caused by noroviruses?

Norovirus illness usually begins 24 - 48 hours after exposure, but can appear as early as 10 hours after exposure. Symptoms usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and stomach cramping. Sometimes people have a low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and a general sense of tiredness. The illness is usually brief, with symptoms lasting only 1 or 2 days.

How serious is norovirus disease?

Norovirus disease is usually not serious, but people may feel very sick. Most people get better within 1 or 2 days, and have no long-term health effects from the illness. Sometimes people are unable to drink enough liquids to replace what they lose from vomiting and diarrhea, and they can become dehydrated and need to see a doctor. This problem usually occurs only among the very young, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems.

How is norovirus spread?

Noroviruses are very contagious and spread easily from person to person. The virus is found in the stool and vomit of infected people. People can become infected in several ways, including eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated by infected food handlers, touching surfaces or objects contaminated with norovirus and then touching their mouth before handwashing, or having direct contact with another person who is infected and then touching their mouth before handwashing. Outbreaks also have occurred from eating undercooked oysters harvested from contaminated waters - cooking kills the virus. Drinking water contaminated by sewage can also be a source of these viruses. Persons working in day-care centers or nursing homes should pay special attention to children or residents who have norovirus illness. This virus can spread quickly in these places.

How long are people contagious?

People infected with norovirus are contagious from the moment they begin feeling ill to at least 3 days after recovery. Some people may be contagious for as long as 2 weeks after recovery. Therefore, good handwashing is important. Persons infected with norovirus should not prepare food while they have symptoms and for 3 days after they recover. Infected people do not become long-term carriers of norovirus.

Who gets norovirus infection?

Anyone can become infected with these viruses. Because there are many different strains of norovirus, norovirus infection and illness can re-occur throughout a person’s lifetime.

What treatment is available for people with norovirus infection?

Currently, there is no specific medication or vaccine for norovirus. Norovirus infection cannot be treated with antibiotics. By drinking fluids, such as juice or water, people can reduce their chance of becoming dehydrated. Sports drinks do not replace the nutrients and minerals lost during this illness.

Do infected people need to be excluded from school, work or daycare?

Since the virus is passed in vomit and stool, children should not go to daycare or school while they have diarrhea or vomiting. Once illness ends, children can return to daycare, but handwashing must be strictly monitored. Persons who work in nursing homes, take care of patients, or handle food should stay out of work until at least three days after symptoms end.

Can norovirus infections be prevented?

You can decrease your chance of coming in contact with noroviruses by:

- Frequent handwashing with warm water and soap
- Promptly disinfecting contaminated surfaces with household chlorine bleach-based cleaners
- Washing soiled clothing and linens
- Avoiding food or water from sources that may be contaminated
- Cooking oysters completely to kill the virus

Effective Cleaning Product List

Registered Antimicrobial Products Effective Against *Norovirus* (Norwalk-like virus)

<u>EPA Reg#</u>	<u>Primary Product Name</u>
1677-203	OXY-SEPT LDI
1839-79	NP 4.5 DETERGENT/ DISINFECTANT
1839-81	NP 9.0 DETERGENT/DISINFECTANT
1839-83	DETERGENT DISINFECTANT PUMP SPRAY
1839-94	NP 3.2 (D&F) DETERGENT/DISINFECTANT
1839-96	NP 9.0 (D&F) DETERGENT/DISINFECTANT
1839-100	VETERINARY TYPE DISINFECTANT
1839-174	STEPAN TOWELETTE
6659-3	SPRAY NINE
6836-75	LONZA FORMULATION S-21
6836-77	LONZA FORMULATION S-18
6836-78	Lonza Formulation R-82
6836-266	BARDAC-205M-10
6836-305	BARDAC-205M-23
10324-58	MAQUAT 128
10324-59	MAQUAT 64
10324-93	MAQUAT 64PD
10324-105	MAQUAT 128PD
10324-140	MAQUAT MQ2525M-CPV
56392-7	DISPATCH HOSPITAL CLEANER DISINFECTANT
61178-2	PUBBLIC PLACES
67619-8	CPPC ULTRA BLEACH 2
67619-12	CPPC TSUNAMI
67619-13	CPPC STORM
67619-17	SHIELD
70060-19	ASEPTROL S10-TAB
71654-7	VIRKON
74559-1	ACCEL TB
73232-1	ALPET D2

Any products not listed here may not be effective at eliminating norovirus. Please ask your supplier to provide you with scientific documentation for their products regarding the effective elimination of norovirus. If they are unable or unwilling to do so, strongly reconsider purchasing their product for the elimination of norovirus.