

FACT SHEET

Norovirus

What is norovirus?

Norovirus is a very contagious virus that causes vomiting and diarrhea. Anyone can get infected and sick with norovirus.

How is it spread?

There are multiple ways to get infected with norovirus. It can be spread by direct contact with an infected person, by consuming contaminated food or water, or by touching contaminated surfaces and then putting your unwashed hands in your mouth. Foods commonly contaminated include raw shellfish, prepared green salads, frostings, deviled eggs, and prepared sandwiches.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of norovirus often include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal cramping and pain
- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Headache
- Body aches

Symptoms usually begin 12-48 hours after exposure. An infected person is contagious to others while they are actively ill until 2-3 days after their symptoms have resolved.

This fact sheet is for informational purposes only and is not intended for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information contact your health care provider or visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

How is it prevented?

- Practice proper personal hygiene and hand washing especially after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Handle and prepare foods safely.
- When you are sick, do not prepare food for or care for others.
- Carefully clean and disinfect surfaces after someone vomits or has diarrhea.
- Keep food safe from norovirus by routinely cleaning kitchen surfaces and utensils.
- Wash contaminated laundry thoroughly after someone vomits or has diarrhea.

How is it treated?

There is no specific treatment or cure for norovirus. Most people with norovirus recover completely within 1-3 days.

Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration during periods of vomiting and diarrhea. If dehydration occurs due to fluid loss from prolonged or extreme vomiting or diarrhea call a doctor. Dehydration can be dangerous particularly in children.

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