

Norovirus – Viral Diarrhoea and Vomiting

Infection Prevention

How common is Norovirus ?

Norovirus is the most common cause of gastroenteritis in the UK (gastroenteritis is inflammation of the stomach and intestines. The main symptoms are vomiting and diarrhoea).

These viruses occur seasonally and are more common during the cooler months. They are sometimes called winter vomiting viruses.

How is the virus spread?

The viruses are only carried by humans and can be transmitted in various ways:

1. Breathing in – when in close contact with a person who is vomiting, a fine mist of particles passes through the air which is then breathed in
2. Contact with a contaminated environment, e.g. soiled surfaces, door handles, toilet fittings
3. By consuming contaminated food or water or poor food handling. During outbreaks, it is recommended that no food is left exposed.

How long after getting exposed to Norovirus do symptoms start?

Symptoms usually begin around 12-48 hours after exposure but can be as little as 4 hours or as long as 3 days after exposure to someone with Norovirus .

How long do symptoms last?

Symptoms of Norovirus usually last 1 to 3 days. It often starts with a sudden onset of nausea, followed by projectile vomiting and watery diarrhoea.

Other symptoms of Norovirus include:

- Vomiting in over 50% of cases
- Diarrhoea
- Abdominal cramps
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Chills and fever
- Muscle pains.

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

What is the treatment, and can I pass Norovirus on to others?

There is no specific treatment for this illness other than fluid replacement. However, the very young and the elderly may experience prolonged symptoms. Taking anti-diarrhoeal medication is not recommended.

You will be able to pass on this infection for up to 48 hours after your symptoms have stopped. Person-to-person spread is very common and may be difficult to contain.

General information?

Do not bring in food or drink for patients or yourself to consume during outbreaks.

Do not visit other relatives or friends within the Trust, if you have been to a ward that is currently affected with Norovirus.

On occasions, if we experience an increase in patients with Norovirus, we may need to limit visitors to affected areas.

Please do not visit if you or your family members are unwell with any of the symptoms listed in this leaflet.

You may be advised if you need to wear disposable aprons and gloves, but you always need to wash your hands with soap and water before and after visiting your relatives.

If I'm suffering from Norovirus, how can I prevent others from becoming infected?

The best way is to quarantine yourself (avoid contact with others) until you have been symptom free for at least 48 hours. Do not visit the hospital or care homes as a visitor. If you are a patient you must tell staff that you have, or have recently had diarrhoea and vomiting.

Good hand hygiene is important in preventing others becoming infected – this includes thorough hand washing with soap and water before and after contact. It is advised not rely on alcohol gels as these do not kill the virus. A bleach-based cleaner is recommended for the lavatory and hard surface. Food preparation should also be avoided until three days after symptoms have gone altogether.

For further information

Please speak to the nurse or doctor caring for you.

Additional information is available from:

Infection Prevention Team

Telephone: 01902 307999 extension 88754

Working hours: 9:00am – 5:00pm, 7 days a week

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。