

How can we prevent it?

Because the virus spreads so quickly and easily, not all infections can be prevented. However, the following measures will reduce the chance of it spreading:

1. GOOD HANDWASHING

Hand Washing with soap and water is the key to the prevention of Norovirus infection. Hands must be washed before handling food and after visiting the toilet. Anyone with diarrhoea should not prepare or handle food for others.

2. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Wear a mask when attending people who are vomiting
- Cover clothing with gown/apron when providing direct care
- Only wear gloves when handling blood & body fluids.

3. CLEANING SURFACES

The virus can remain alive for days on floors and surfaces so vomit or diarrhoea should be cleaned up immediately. We advise to clean with detergent followed by diluted bleach to sanitise surfaces.

Remember These Main Points:

Direct person to person spread can occur through inhaling airborne particles of virus released during vomiting. Norovirus is very hardy and can survive for long periods on any surface touched by contaminated hands. This is particularly so for toilet surfaces, and door knobs.

- When people are ill, they excrete a large amount of norovirus in their vomit and feces. Food can become contaminated if infected food handlers don't wash their hands well after toileting.
- Proper hand hygiene is critical as infection can be transmitted from improperly cleaned hands to food, drink, or environmental surfaces.

Department of Veterans Affairs

Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics

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For questions about Norovirus or other communicable diseases, contact

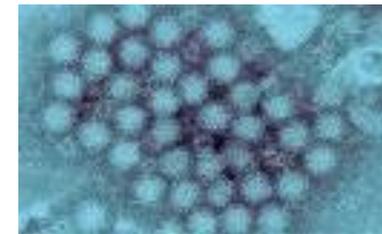
Dr. Susan Thurston, Infection Preventionist
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Department of Veterans Affairs

Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center and Clinics

NOROVIRUS

(Viral Gastroenteritis)



An information leaflet for patients, residents, health care workers and employees

What Is Noroviruses?

The most common cause of gastroenteritis (stomach flu), noroviruses is a group of viruses that have also been called "winter vomiting virus", or "Norwalk-like viruses".

How Is It Transmitted:

- By eating or drinking foods that have been contaminated with norovirus.
- Direct person to person spread.
- Contaminated surfaces, fecal or via the mouth.

Treatment:

Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. No antiviral medication or vaccines exist for norovirus. It cannot be treated with antibiotics because it is a virus.

Symptoms:

Norovirus usually includes nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramps. Symptoms often start suddenly and the infected person may feel very sick. Symptoms occur about 12-28 hours after contact or exposure.

Incubation and Duration:

Duration is usually 1 to 2 days.

Wash Your Hands and Wipe Down

This virus will persist unless we are most vigilant in practicing personnel safety on a daily basis, for yourself, your family, and those you work with. While at work, clean your office space each and every day – every touchable



surface and use **ONLY the Dispatch wipes or the Oxivir TB wipes. DO NOT use PDI wipes.**

- Wash your hands with soap and water after using the restroom
- When preparing food, wash it thoroughly.
- Keep your office and home clean, wear gloves when doing so, and wash your hands thoroughly after taking off your gloves.
- Remind your family and co-workers to please wash their hands.

Norovirus Risks:

Norovirus is extremely contagious and spreads easily. It can be difficult to contain.

Outbreaks occur more often in semi-closed environments such as hospitals, nursing homes, and schools.

Stay home:

If you are ill with vomiting or diarrhea. Do not go to work or school until 72 hours 48-72 after symptoms resolve. Staying home is especially important for those who work in food service or care for others.

Report illness to supervisor if working in a food facility, day care, or patient care.



There is no specific treatment to rid your body of the virus. Your immune system will overcome the virus, given time. To assist with recovery, extra fluid and rest are recommended. However, a doctor should always be consulted if symptoms are severe and they may give further advice or treat specific symptoms.