

NOROVIRUS

Norovirus is a very contagious virus that causes vomiting and diarrhea. It causes acute gastroenteritis, an inflammation of the stomach or intestines. It is sometimes called the "stomach bug".

DID YOU KNOW? Norovirus is the leading cause of vomiting, diarrhea, and foodborne illness in the U.S. It can affect anyone, but vulnerable groups: young children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for severe infections.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Norovirus is found in the stool (poop) and vomit of people who are infected. You can get sick if norovirus germs get into your mouth. This can happen when you have:

- Direct contact with an infected person
- Consume contaminated food or liquids
- Touch contaminated surfaces and then put unwashed hands in your mouth

SYMPTOMS: appear **12 to 48 hours after exposure** and include diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, stomach pain, fever, headache, and body aches.

Severe illness can lead to dehydration, especially in vulnerable groups. Symptoms of dehydration include decreased urination, dry mouth, and throat, dizziness, crying with few tears, and unusual sleepiness.

HOW CAN I PREVENT THE SPREAD?

Take steps to protect yourself and others, including:



- Wash hands frequently.
- Cook shellfish thoroughly; wash fruits and vegetables.
- Disinfect surfaces with a bleach solution.
- Wash laundry in hot water.
- Stay home for 48 hours after symptoms stop.
- Avoid preparing food for others when you are sick.

TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

Most people recover from norovirus within **1 to 3 days**, and there is no specific medicine for it. Antibiotic drugs will not help treat norovirus infections because they fight bacteria, not viruses.

- Stay hydrated with fluids like water and broth.
- Rest, and eat bland foods (rice, crackers, toast, bananas).
- Avoid contact with others and stay home from school and work if you are sick. Contact your child's school nurse if they are feeling ill.
- If symptoms worsen or don't improve, contact a healthcare provider.



You can still spread the virus for up to 2 weeks after recovering.

MORE RESOURCES



- [When and How to Wash Your Hands](#)
- [Norovirus Fact Sheet for Food Workers](#)
- [Food Safety](#)

REPORTING FOODBORNE ILLNESS



If you suspect your illness is food-related after dining out, report it to the West Hartford-Bloomfield Health District at (860) 561-7900.

Locations:

580 Cottage Grove Rd, Suite 100, Bloomfield
50 S Main St, Room 417, West Hartford

