

Know the FACTS

Norovirus (“stomach flu”)

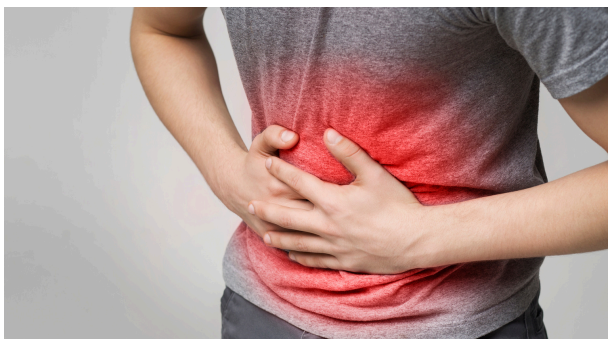
Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that causes stomach illness, leading to sudden vomiting and diarrhea. It spreads quickly, especially in places like schools, daycares and healthcare facilities, and can be more serious for young children, older adults and those with other health conditions.

How norovirus spreads

Norovirus spreads through germs found in feces and vomit. Common ways it is transmitted include:

- Being in close contact with someone who has it, like sharing food or caring for them.
- Eating or drinking something that has the virus.
- Touching dirty surfaces or objects and then putting your hands in your mouth.

Even after you feel better, you **can still spread the virus for up to two weeks.**



Symptoms of norovirus

Symptoms of norovirus usually **start 12 to 48 hours after exposure** and include diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, and stomach pain. Some people may also have a fever, headache, or body aches.

The illness can lead to dehydration, so it's important to drink plenty of fluids like water and electrolyte drinks to stay hydrated.

Most people with norovirus illness get better within 1-3 days. There is no specific medicine to treat people with norovirus illness.

Ways to prevent illness

Norovirus is very contagious, but you can take steps to protect yourself and others, including:

- **Wash your hands** well and often for at least 20 seconds.
- Cook shellfish thoroughly and wash fruits and vegetables.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces.
- Wash laundry in hot water.
- Avoid swallowing water while swimming in pools.
- **Stay home 2 days after symptoms stop** and wait at least 2 weeks before swimming.



**HAMILTON COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH**

250 William Howard Taft Road, 2nd Floor, Cincinnati, OH 45219
Phone 513.946.7800 Fax 513.946.7890
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How to properly disinfect facilities

Because norovirus can rapidly spread throughout facilities like schools, daycares, nursing homes and hospitals, it is important to follow these sanitation guidelines to protect yourself and others.

Recommended materials:

- Disposable gloves
- Masks
- Eye protection or face shields
- Gown or other personal protective equipment (PPE)
- EPA-registered antimicrobial cleaning product(s)



Always wear protective gear properly and ensure good ventilation before disinfecting. Carefully follow label instructions when using chemicals.

Remove all visible debris with absorbent material before applying chemicals, and dispose of waste in a double layer of plastic bags.

Cleaning hard surfaces

When cleaning hard surfaces like toys, floors, tables and chairs, a bleach solution is recommended. Follow the directions on the bleach bottle for preparing a diluted bleach solution. If your bottle does not have directions, you can make a bleach solution by mixing:

- 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) of bleach per gallon of room temperature water or
- 4 teaspoons of bleach per quart of room temperature water

Never mix bleach (or any disinfectant) with other cleaners, as this can release harmful vapors. In food service areas, only use disinfectants that are approved for use around food.

Cleaning upholstered surfaces and fabrics

For upholstered surfaces like carpet, rugs and furniture, steam clean at 158°F for 5 minutes or 212°F for 1 minute for complete inactivation.

For clothes and linens, run items through a pre-wash cycle, then use a regular wash cycle with detergent and dry separately from uncontaminated clothing at a high temperature greater than 170°F.



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