Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramps. Illness caused by noroviruses spread easily and are sometimes called the stomach bug or the stomach flu.

**SYMPTOMS**

Symptoms of norovirus may include:

- diarrhea (loose poop, more often than usual)
- vomiting (throwing up)
- nausea (upset stomach)
- stomach pain
- headache or muscle aches
- low fever or chills

Symptoms of norovirus can begin from 12 to 48 hours after infection.

Norovirus makes people feel really sick and can be serious for some people. It can make you throw up or have diarrhea many times a day. This can cause you to lose a lot of fluids (called dehydration).

Dehydration is serious and may need special medical care. Dehydration is more of a problem for children under 5, the elderly, and people whose bodies cannot fight disease. If you have vomiting or diarrhea, be sure to replace the fluids you lose. You can do this by drinking lots of water, making a drink that is half water and half juice or soda (without caffeine) or using an oral rehydration fluid. Oral rehydration fluid is a mixture of salts and sugar mixed with water that replaces lost minerals (ask your pharmacist).

**TREATMENT**

Most people with norovirus get better within a day or two without treatment. You should drink fluids if you have diarrhea and vomiting to keep from becoming dehydrated. If you become dehydrated (not peeing, dry mouth, feeling dizzy when you stand up) or have cramping you should call your doctor. Antibiotics do not work on noroviruses. You can get norovirus more than once.

**HOW IT SPREADS**

Norovirus spreads easily. Noroviruses are found in the stool (poop) and vomit of infected people. You can get norovirus by:

- eating or drinking things that have norovirus on them
- touching something with norovirus on it and then putting your fingers in your mouth
- caring for or cleaning up after someone who is sick with norovirus and not washing your hands well
- sharing food, drinks or utensils with someone who is sick with norovirus

People with norovirus can spread the illness to others for up to 2 weeks after they are feeling better. Norovirus can spread quickly in places like schools, childcare centers, nursing homes, dorms and cruise ships.

**HOW TO PREVENT NOROVIRUS INFECTION—READ THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS PAGE**
how to prevent
Norovirus

If you have norovirus you should:
• Wash your hands well after using the bathroom.
• Not make food for others when you are sick and for 3 days after your symptoms are gone.
• Throw away foods that you made right before or while you were sick.

If you take care of someone who is sick with norovirus you should:
• Wash your hands well before making food, after changing diapers, helping a sick person use the bathroom, touching laundry soiled with vomit or diarrhea, or cleaning soiled areas.
• Wash soiled clothes and linens right away with hot water and soap.
• Flush stool (poop) and vomit down the toilet.
• Clean soiled surfaces, like the toilet and areas around toilet, with a bleach-based cleaner. A solution of one part bleach to 10 parts water works well and is cheap to make. Mix new bleach solution every day. Use gloves to protect your skin.

Everyone should:
• Wash hands often.
• Rinse raw fruits and vegetables well before preparing and eating them.
• Cook oysters and shellfish well before eating them.

MORE ABOUT HANDWASHING

How to Wash
1. Wet
2. Soap
3. Scrub 15 – 20 seconds
4. Rinse
5. Dry
6. Use towel to turn off faucet

WHEN TO WASH
• Before and after eating
• Before, during and after making and touching food
• After using the bathroom or helping a child use the bathroom
• After changing or checking a diaper
• After coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose and after wiping a child’s nose
• After touching blood or body fluids (urine, feces, vomit, etc)
• After touching animals or their waste
• After touching trash
• After touching money
• Whenever hands look, feel or smell dirty

Washing hands is the best way to prevent the spread of many illnesses. Hand sanitizers do NOT work on noroviruses.