

Norovirus Information Sheet

Recently we have recognized that an increased number of our students are out sick with vomiting and diarrhea. Illness of this kind is commonly caused by a group of germs called noroviruses. Norovirus is easily spread from person to person. Norovirus outbreaks are common in schools and daycare facilities. We want you to know what you can do to help prevent your child from becoming ill.

What are symptoms of norovirus?

The most common symptoms of norovirus are diarrhea, vomiting, and abdominal pain. Fever, chills, headache, body aches and fatigue may also be present. Symptom onset is usually sudden, which is very typical of norovirus. Most people get better within 1 or 2 days and have no long-term health effects from a norovirus infection.

How is norovirus spread?

Norovirus is highly contagious. People become infected with norovirus by swallowing it. This can happen when a child touches a contaminated surface and then touches his mouth. Infection can also happen when a child eats or drinks food or water contaminated with norovirus or has direct contact with an infected person who has poor personal hygiene.

How can I protect myself and my children from becoming ill?

- Teach your child to wash hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after using the bathroom (or diaper change) and before eating
 - Hand sanitizer is not a substitute for handwashing and does not kill some viruses including norovirus
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick using household chlorine bleach-based cleaners
- Avoid putting hands, toys, or other things in the mouth. Children and adults will often chew or suck on objects without thinking, and this habit can spread germs
- Keep your child home from school when he or she is sick and for two days after symptoms stop
- Avoid preparing food for others while you have symptoms and for at least 3 days after you recover

If your child has symptoms of norovirus, consult with your health care provider. Your child should stay home until 48 hours after these symptoms have resolved.

Information on norovirus can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html>