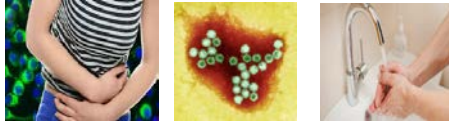


Norovirus Education



Norovirus is one of a **group** of viruses that cause **acute gastroenteritis**. There are many different strains so a person can be infected multiple times in a lifetime or even during a season. Norovirus is a sudden, acute illness that is **extremely** infectious. Being within a 2 metre (6 foot) radius of an infected person who is vomiting can cause illness unless you're wearing a mask with an attached face visor.

Symptoms:

- **Acute onset** of nausea, vomiting, watery non-bloody diarrhea, with abdominal cramping within 12 - 48 hours of exposure.
- Acute self-limited illness which generally lasts 24 - 48 hours for most people.

Transmission:

- Fecal-oral route from contact with infected person (e.g. putting your fingers in/near your mouth, being exposed to ill person's aerosolized vomit), ingesting contaminated food or water, touching contaminated equipment and surfaces.

Immediately isolate symptomatic patient/resident with dedicated bathroom/commode on Contact GI Precautions, chart symptoms, collect stool samples for norovirus. Other tests (e.g. C&S, C-Diff) are only to be collected when appropriate (e.g. C-Diff meets Case Definition) or following consultation. Confine patients/residents on precautions/isolation to their rooms to prevent transmission. Once norovirus has been lab-confirmed from two case specimens, stop sending further samples for testing.

Treatment:

- Rehydration and electrolyte correction is very important as there is no antiviral treatment

Prevention & Control:

- Hand Hygiene by **everyone** entering/exiting facility/unit/patient/resident rooms/other spaces (e.g. bathrooms, meeting/conference rooms, cafeterias/lunchrooms, etc.)
- Ensure hand hygiene is done with soap and water after any contact with patient/resident environment and after touching any high-touch items (e.g. keyboards, etc.)
- Clean & disinfect all shared & dedicated equipment after each use; including surfaces
- Food/Drink in any Clinical area of an Acute or Residential setting is **NOT ALLOWED** at any time of the year. Confine food/drink to designated/dedicated Cafeterias/Lunchrooms
- Never share food that **other fingers have, or may have touched** (i.e. popcorn, chips, unwrapped candies, food platters)
- Early recognition of S& S along with immediate isolation & confinement in a private room with dedicated bathroom/commode of ill patients/residents in their rooms. Speak with IC if a norovirus patient/resident is identified after spending any amount of time in a multiple bedroom where other patients have been exposed as it is normal to keep patient in this room; dedicate a commode; terminally clean the shared BR, & monitor the other patients/residents for norovirus S& S
- Stop all group activities
- Restrict visitors to 2 per patient/resident & **ONLY** for compassionate reasons. Restricted visitors must not go to any other patient rooms or public areas before/during/after visit
- Staff must not come to work when ill. If you become sick on duty with norovirus signs & symptoms, put on a mask with attached face visor; contact your Manager (Designate) to make arrangements to be relieved of duties to go home; advise OH&S of infectious symptoms
- If staff bathroom was used, close it, and advise Environmental Services (i.e. Crothall-Compass) of need for Isolation GI Clean before anyone else uses that space
- Staff to stay home until 48 hours symptom-free of nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- If food-handler, stay home for 72 hours symptom-free of nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea
- Do not prepare food for others.

Notify IPAC (Infection Prevention & Control) of any clusters, trends, outbreaks (OB).

Outbreak Case Definition for Norovirus: 3 symptomatic Patients/Residents within a 96 hour period. Symptomatic on-duty HCW (Health Care Workers) also count as cases.