

# Health Alert: Norovirus

Norovirus infection can cause severe vomiting and diarrhea that start suddenly. Noroviruses are highly contagious. They commonly spread through food or water that is contaminated during preparation or through contaminated surfaces. Noroviruses can also spread through close contact with a person who has norovirus infection.

*For the latest information on Norovirus, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/>*

*If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at [Schoolhealth@onenessfamily.org](mailto:Schoolhealth@onenessfamily.org).*

## **How is Norovirus spread?**

You can get norovirus by:

- Having direct contact with someone with norovirus, such as by caring for them, sharing food or eating utensils with them, or eating food handled by them.
- Eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus.
- Touching surfaces or objects contaminated with norovirus and then putting your unwashed fingers in your mouth.

An infected person is most contagious when they have symptoms of norovirus, especially vomiting. However, studies have shown that norovirus can be spread for two weeks or more after an infected individual feels better.

## **Norovirus Symptoms**

Norovirus causes inflammation of the stomach or intestines, or both. This is called acute gastroenteritis. A person usually develops symptoms 12 to 48 hours after being exposed to Norovirus. Most people with Norovirus get better within 1 to 3 days.

The most common symptoms are listed below:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Stomach pain

Other symptoms include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Body aches

If you have Norovirus, you can feel extremely ill and throw up or have diarrhea many times a day. This can lead to dehydration, especially in young children, older adults, and people with other illnesses.

Symptoms of dehydration include:

- Decrease in urination
- Dry mouth and throat
- Feeling dizzy when standing up

Children who are dehydrated may cry with few or no tears and be unusually sleepy or fussy.

## **How can we limit the spread of Norovirus?**

- Wash your hands often
- Rinse fruits and vegetables
- Cook shellfish thoroughly
- Stay home when sick and for two days after symptoms stop
- Avoid preparing food for others when sick and for two days after symptoms stop

## **Precautions Taken at School**

When there is a case of RSV, our school takes extra precautions to prevent the spread of illness. Our teachers educate students about the importance of proper handwashing, and we ensure that classrooms are disinfected more frequently.

We are diligently wiping down high-contact surfaces and encouraging students to wash their hands with soap and water to reduce the spread of illness. We are also asking parents to help us mitigate the spread of illness by keeping sick children at home until they are well enough to return to school. As a reminder, our school's health policy states that students remain at home until they have been fever-, vomit- and/or diarrhea-free for 24 hours without the assistance of medication. A fever is

considered to be 100.5 F and above.