

Infection Prevention and Control

Norovirus

This leaflet aims to answer a number of commonly asked questions about Norovirus.

If after reading this you have any concerns or further questions please discuss this with the Doctor or Nurse caring for you.

What is Norovirus?

Norovirus is a virus which causes individual cases and outbreaks of gastroenteritis, particularly in places like schools, residential homes and hospitals. There isn't a specific group who are at risk of contracting Norovirus - it affects people of all ages.

Norovirus is sometimes referred to as the "Winter Vomiting Bug" but it can happen all year round.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms usually start within 12-48 hours of being infected, with a sudden onset of nausea (feeling sick) followed by vomiting and/or diarrhoea. Some people experience raised temperature, headaches and aching limbs.

Most people make a recovery within 24-48 hours.

How does it spread?

Virus particles can spread from the faeces and vomit of an infected patient. It can be picked up on your hands and transferred to your gut when eating or drinking.



Patient Information

Hand Hygiene is the most important thing we can all do to prevent the spread and protect ourselves.

This must be done thoroughly using soap and water. Alcohol gel is not effective against this virus.

How is Norovirus treated?

There is no treatment for Norovirus. There is risk of dehydration (lack of fluids) whilst symptomatic, so it is important to drink plenty of water. Norovirus does not generally require hospitalisation.

Visiting in hospital

In order to limit the spread of infection we ask visitors to confirm:

- They have not had diarrhoea and/or vomiting in the last 48 hours;
- They have not been in contact with anyone who has had diarrhoea and/or vomiting in the last 48 hours;
- They will wash their hands in soap and water.

All visitors are advised to stay away during an outbreak; however in exceptional circumstances it may be agreed visiting can occur. This will be decided by the Ward Manager and team, and will be based on individual patient cases.

In this situation visitors must wash their hands with soap and water when leaving the patients environment and make sure they report to staff if they become unwell.

Further Information

If you have any other questions or would like further information, please speak to the ward manager in the area where you are visiting, or contact the Infection Prevention and Control team on 024 7696 4791.

Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact 024 7696 4791 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk

Document History

Department:	Infection Control
Contact:	24791
Updated:	July 2022
Review:	July 2024
Version:	8
Reference:	HIC/LFT/854/09