



Norovirus



What is Norovirus?

Norovirus is a group of viruses which can produce an inflammation of the intestinal tract, with symptoms of nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. It is a common water and foodborne illness that can occur in all age groups. It usually causes mild to moderate illness lasting 24-60 hours and resolves on its own. Symptoms generally occur 12-48 hours after exposure. The virus is most contagious during the acute stage whether there are symptoms present, contagiousness can continue up to 2 weeks after you feel better.

How is Norovirus spread?

Norovirus is very contagious and can be spread easily by:

- Eating or drinking food or water contaminated by persons infected with norovirus.
- Having direct contact with a person infected with norovirus.
- Touching surfaces or objects contaminated with norovirus and then touching their mouth before hand washing.
- Contamination of food or water can occur when raw sewage pollutes the water.
- Eating food from contaminated waters such as oysters and clams.

How is Norovirus treated?

- Consult your doctor for norovirus testing. Norovirus can be diagnosed by checking a stool sample, however lab testing is difficult and is usually only done if there is a suspected outbreak.
- Most people get better within 1 to 3 days. There is no specific medicine to treat people for norovirus, antibiotics will not help.
- It's important to treat symptoms and stay hydrated.
- Seek medical care for severe dehydration.

How can Norovirus be prevented?

- Practice good personal hygiene and hand washing.
- Use safe food and water supplies.
- Cook foods thoroughly.
- Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables before serving.
- Norovirus may not be cleaned and disinfected by common cleaning agents. See [Michigan Guidelines of Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection of Norovirus](#) for specific norovirus cleaning guidelines.
- See also [EPA List G](#) for a complete, searchable list of cleaning agents that work against norovirus.

Symptoms of Norovirus:

- Nausea
- Rapid onset vomiting
- Abdominal pain/cramps
- Watery/non-bloody diarrhea
- Low grade fever
- Headache

*Jackson County Health Department
Communicable Disease Dept.
1715 Lansing Ave.
Jackson, MI 49202
(517) 788-4655*

www.mijackson.org



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CDC Public Information

800-232-4636 (800-CDC-INFO)

TTY 888-232-6348