

Norovirus



Saskatchewan
Ministry of
Health

What is Norovirus?

- It is a gastrointestinal illness caused by the Norwalk virus.

How does a person get Norovirus?

- Norovirus is spread by:
 - Person-to-person contact if hands are not washed thoroughly
 - Drinking water or eating food contaminated with the virus
 - Contact with contaminated surfaces such as doorknobs, railings, taps, etc,
 - Contact with infected stool or vomit.
- Outbreaks of Norovirus commonly occur in long-term care facilities, hospitals, schools and cruise ships.
- This virus often causes food-borne outbreaks.

What are the signs and symptoms?

- Symptoms may include abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headaches and low-grade fever.
- Symptoms usually develop 24 to 48 hours after a person has become infected.
- The illness usually lasts 48 hours.

How is Norovirus treated?

- Most people recover on their own without treatment.
- Drink plenty of fluids to replace water lost through diarrhea. If symptoms are more severe, see your doctor.

How is Norovirus prevented?

- Always wash hands with soap and water:
 - After using the toilet
 - After diapering a child
 - Before preparing or handling food
 - Before eating
- If hand washing is not possible, use alcohol-based hand gels.
- Cook foods thoroughly.
- Clean all surfaces thoroughly, especially shared surfaces like taps, railings, door handles, counters, etc.
- Do not attend daycare, school or place of work while symptoms are present and for 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

Norovirus Quick Facts

- It is an illness that principally causes diarrhea that may be accompanied by nausea and vomiting.
- Outbreaks commonly occur in community facilities like long term care facilities and cruise ships.
- Good frequent hand washing practice greatly reduces spread.

**For more information contact your doctor, local public health office
or visit www.health.gov.sk.ca.**