

FactSheet

Para Su Información

Norovirus

What are noroviruses?

The noroviruses, also sometimes referred to as Norwalk-like viruses, are a group of viruses that cause vomiting and diarrhea.

Who gets norovirus infection?

Anyone who becomes ill from infection with a norovirus.

How are the viruses spread?

Norovirus can easily be spread from person to person. Ways that noroviruses can spread include:

- Eating food or drinking liquids that have been contaminated by the feces or vomit of an infected person.
- Touching or surfaces contaminated with the virus, and then placing parts of the hand in their mouth.
- Ingesting particles of vomitus that have been aerosolized.
- Direct contact with a sick person (such as caring for a sick individual or sharing food, water or eating utensils).

What are the symptoms of norovirus infection?

Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and abdominal cramps that generally last for one or two days. Other symptoms such as low-grade fever, headache, muscle aches, chills and fatigue may also be present. Typically, children experience more vomiting than adults, though most people infected with a norovirus have both diarrhea and vomiting. Dehydration is the most common complication of infection with norovirus.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually appear within one to two days after exposure to the virus, but illness can occur as soon as 12 hours afterwards.

How long can an infected person spread the virus?

The infectious period begins with onset of symptoms and usually ceases three days after symptoms are gone, however, some people are still infectious two weeks after their symptoms have ended.

What is the treatment for norovirus infection?

Norovirus illnesses are generally self-limited, lasting one a few days. Treatment consists of drinking fluids to prevent dehydration. Fruit juices and sugary soft drinks should be avoided. Noroviruses cannot be treated with antibiotics since these medications are not effective against viruses.

How can the spread of norovirus be stopped?

Individuals infected with a norovirus should stay home while they are ill. Children should be kept out of the child care or school setting as long as diarrhea or vomiting is present. People working as food handlers, medical practitioners, and those who work in child care centers or schools should exclude themselves from work until 72 hours after symptoms have resolved. Individuals should wash their hands with soap and warm water after using the toilet, and before meals and snacks. Surfaces that may have been contaminated by feces or vomit should be disinfected with a bleach-based household cleaner.

Where can I get more information?

Contact your doctor or the Southern Nevada Health District Office of Epidemiology at (702) 759-1300.



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