

Norovirus

Fact Sheet

What is it?

Norovirus is a common cause of diarrhea and vomiting in humans. Symptoms include watery diarrhea, vomiting, cramps, headache, fever, chills and sore throat. Symptoms usually start suddenly and last from 24-48 hours.

Where does it come from and how is it spread?

Contaminated water, shellfish and salad ingredients are the most common sources for community outbreaks. The virus is very contagious and spreads easily from person to person through the fecal-oral route. It is often responsible for outbreaks in nursing homes.

What can I do to protect myself?

Thorough hand washing is the best prevention. People ill with diarrhea should be isolated from others. Washrooms and frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned daily.

In institutions, isolate those who are ill until they are symptom-free for 72 hours.

Ill staff should remain off work until 72 hours after symptoms disappear.

Encourage visitors to wash their hands before and after visiting the facility.

Other Questions?

Talk to your health care provider or call our Communicable Disease Program at 613-966-5500 x349. Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY Dial 711 (1-800-267-6511) | www.hpepublichealth.ca

Reference

- Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors, Norwalk Virus, August 2000.

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