



Norovirus

Patient information



This leaflet explains Norovirus, its causes and how you can help to prevent the spread.

It is not intended to replace the discussion between you and the doctor or nurse caring for you, but it may act as a starting point for discussion.

What is Norovirus?

A virus which causes individual cases and outbreaks of gastroenteritis, particularly in places like schools, residential homes and hospitals, due to close contact between people.

Sometimes called the winter vomiting bug. However, Norovirus can occur any time throughout the year.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms usually start within 12 to 48 hours of being infected, with a sudden onset of nausea followed by vomiting and or diarrhoea.

Who is at risk?

Those most at risk are the very young, the elderly, and people with impaired immune systems (those said to be immunocompromised).

How is it confirmed?

A stool sample is sent for laboratory testing.

How can it be treated?

There is no course of treatment.

There is a risk of dehydration (lack of fluids) while you have symptoms, so it is important to remember to drink plenty. Once the illness is over no further action is needed. Norovirus generally does not require hospitalisation.

How does it spread?

Virus particles are spread via the faeces and vomit of an infected individual. You can become infected by touching contaminated surfaces and transferring the virus to your gut by hand to mouth (ingestion).

Can I still have visitors if I am still in hospital?

Wherever possible, visitors are advised to stay away during an outbreak. However, if this is not possible they must wash their hands with soap and water and wear gloves and aprons when visiting.

What precautions are necessary if I am in hospital?

If you are an inpatient in hospital, while you have symptoms you may be moved to a single room or nursed in a bay with other patients with the same infection, to reduce the risk of spreading the infection to other patients.

You will be given your own toilet or commode. All staff must wash their hands upon entering and leaving your room/bay. When caring for you directly, staff will wear gloves and aprons.

What precautions do I need to take at home?

Family members should wash their hands, especially before handling food, before eating, after using the toilet and handling dirty linen or clothing.

Surfaces in bathrooms, kitchens and other areas should be cleaned on a regular basis with household detergents/disinfectants. Dirty linen or clothing should be washed separately at the temperature recommended on washing care labels.



How can I prevent Norovirus spreading?

The most important way for you and visitors to prevent infection spreading is to **wash your hands with plenty of soap and warm running water:**

- **Before eating food and**
- **After going to the toilet**

Complaints and Feedback Team
Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust
Trust Headquarters
Willerby Hill
Beverly Road
Willerby
HU10 6ED



01482 303930



HNF-complaints@nhs.net



[HumberNHSFT](https://www.facebook.com/HumberNHSFT)



[HumberNHSFT](https://twitter.com/HumberNHSFT)



humber.nhs.uk



Caring, Learning
& Growing Together