



For Staff Education

Norovirus

What is it?

- Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- Symptoms include sudden onset of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach cramps
- Symptoms can also include a low-grade fever (< 38.5°C), chills, headache, and muscle aches/fatigue

How is it spread?

- Direct contact
 - Somebody comes into direct contact with the feces or vomit of an ill person
- Indirect contact
 - The virus gets on an environmental surface (i.e. doorknob, light switch, etc.) that is then touched by other people

**Direct and indirect transmission usually happens when someone comes into contact with feces or vomit of an ill person and then eats without first washing their hands*

Where is it found?

- The gastrointestinal tract and feces and vomit of infected persons
- Norovirus can survive on hard surfaces for up to 12 hours and is also commonly found on “high touch surfaces” such as sinks, bed rails and hand rails

Prevention and control

- Use contact precautions (in addition to routine practices) when caring for anyone with new or different diarrheal illness
- Clean hands well and often with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water
- Ensure appropriate cleaning and disinfection of the environment is done, paying particular attention to high-touch surfaces
- Wear gloves when handling soiled linen, and refrain from shaking or disturbing soiled linen to reduce the amount of infected stool or vomit released into the air