

Infection Prevention Quick Guide: Norovirus

Norovirus is a very contagious virus that causes vomiting and diarrhea. Symptoms usually occur within 12 to 48 hours after exposure. Norovirus is transmitted by: (1) direct contact with an infected person; (2) touching contaminated surfaces and then putting your unwashed hands in your mouth; or (3) consuming contaminated food or water.

Point your phone's camera at the QR code for CDC norovirus prevention guidelines.



Infection Prevention Checklist



1. **Resident Placement and Transmission-Based Precautions:** Place residents with suspected or confirmed norovirus on Contact Precautions in a private room with their own and bathroom. If there are no private rooms, you may cohort residents with the same illness together, taking into consideration the residents' multidrug-resistant organism status.
 - a. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - i. Gown and gloves upon room entry
 - ii. Surgical or procedure mask and eye protection if there is an anticipated risk of splash to the face, especially if resident is vomiting.
 - b. Perform hand hygiene with soap and water during outbreaks. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer should not be prohibited when caring for residents with norovirus.
 - c. Restrict ill residents to their room, except for medically necessary care. Meals should also be served in the room.
 - d. Discontinue isolation 48 hours after symptoms resolve.
2. **Laundry:** Handle laundry safely:
 - a. Wear gown and gloves when handling soiled laundry.
 - b. Place contaminated linens and bed curtains into laundry bags and wash in hot water.
3. **Environmental cleaning and disinfection:** Ensure environment of care disinfecting products being used for this resident's room are registered with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with a kill claim against norovirus (List G: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-g-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-norovirus-feline>). Remember different illnesses may require different disinfectant products.
4. **Surveillance:** Monitor additional residents and staff for signs and symptoms of illness.
 - a. Restrict ill staff from work until symptom free for 48 hours
5. **Partner with public health:** Report a suspected outbreak to your local health department (<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/health-department-locator/>)
 - a. Outbreak = number of cases is above your facility baseline (e.g., 3 or more cases of staff or residents with vomiting and/or diarrhea within a 72-hour period)

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6. Additional measures to take during an outbreak:
 - a. Increase frequency of cleaning and disinfecting surfaces
 - i. Unit level cleaning twice a day
 - ii. Frequently touched surfaces three times a day
 - b. Consider discontinuing group activities.
 - c. Cohort staff to care for all ill or all well residents.
 - d. Increase auditing of hand hygiene, PPE use, and environmental cleaning.

Norovirus: How to Share the News



1. **To the resident and those authorized to receive health information:**

You (or your loved one) have tested positive for norovirus. Norovirus is a germ (virus) that can spread from person to person. We will be taking extra precautions like wearing a gown and gloves and giving you care in your room, whenever possible, to make sure the germ doesn't spread to others. We will be cleaning your room frequently. We will also be washing our hands a lot and encourage you to do the same.

2. **To healthcare workers:** This resident is now positive for norovirus and requires Contact Precautions. You must wear gown and gloves every time you go into the room, dedicate equipment, when possible (or clean and disinfect equipment before use on another resident), and always perform good hand hygiene per facility policy. Norovirus can cause healthcare outbreaks. This puts all our residents at risk, so it is important to be consistent with these infection prevention measures.

Additional Resources

CDC Norovirus website (<https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html>):

- Norovirus symptoms
- Prevention strategies



VDH Guidelines for the Control of a Suspected or Confirmed Outbreak of Gastroenteritis Caused by Norovirus in a Long-Term Care Facility:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/13/2023/02/Guidelines-for-Norovirus-OB-in-LTCF.pdf>