

The “Stomach Bug”



What is the “stomach bug?”

Norovirus, sometimes referred to as the “stomach bug,” is a highly contagious virus. Anyone can get infected with norovirus and get sick. Norovirus illness makes it hard to keep food and fluids down. Some people such as the very young, elderly, and immune-compromised are at a greater risk for complications from norovirus.

What are the symptoms of norovirus?

The main norovirus symptoms include diarrhea and vomiting. Symptoms start 1 to 2 days after exposure to the virus and can last up to 72 hours. Complications include dehydration (loss of body fluids) and malnutrition.

How is norovirus spread?

You can become infected by accidentally getting stool or vomit from infected people in your mouth (fecal-oral contamination). This happens by eating food/liquids contaminated with norovirus or by touching surfaces/objects contaminated with norovirus and then putting your fingers in your mouth. You may also get it by having contact with someone who is infected with norovirus (for example, caring for or sharing food with someone with norovirus illness).

What can I do to prevent the spread of norovirus?

- Wash your hands and forearms often with warm water and soap
- If sick, stay at home until at least 24 hours after illness ends
- Wear disposable gloves when changing diapers or taking care of the sick person
- Wipe possibly contaminated surfaces with household chlorine bleach-based cleaners and wash soiled clothing promptly

For more information: <http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/>



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