

# Norovirus

## ***What is Norovirus?***

Noroviruses are viruses that cause acute gastroenteritis in humans.

## ***What are the symptoms of a norovirus infection?***

Norovirus infection usually presents as acute-onset vomiting, watery non-bloody diarrhea with abdominal cramps, and nausea. Low-grade fever also occasionally occurs, and vomiting is more common in children. Dehydration is the most common complication, especially among the young and elderly, and may require medical attention. Symptoms usually last 24 to 60 hours.

## ***How is it spread?***

Noroviruses are transmitted primarily through the fecal-oral route, either by consumption of fecally contaminated food or water or by direct person-to-person spread. Environmental and fomite contamination may also act as a source of infection. Noroviruses are highly contagious and as few as 10 viral particles may be sufficient to infect an individual. Although presymptomatic viral shedding may occur, shedding usually begins with onset of symptoms and may continue for 2 weeks after recovery.

## ***How is a Norovirus infection diagnosed?***

Identification of the virus can be best made from stool specimens taken within 48 to 72 hours after onset of symptoms. Virus can sometimes be found in stool samples taken as late as 2 weeks after recovery.

## ***What is the treatment for a Norovirus infection?***

No specific therapy exists for norovirus gastroenteritis. Symptomatic therapy consists of replacing fluid losses and correcting electrolyte disturbances through oral and intravenous fluid administration.

## ***Where can I get more information?***

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus.htm>