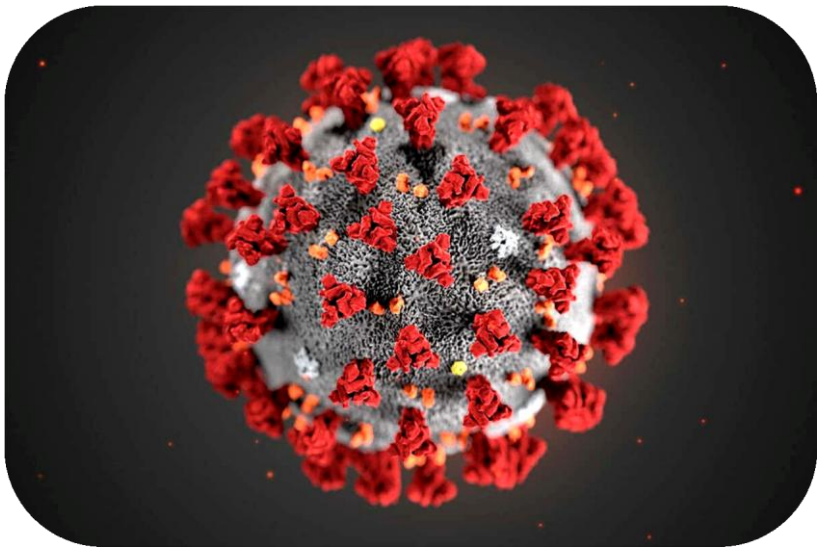


# Norovirus (Winter Vomiting)

Patient information leaflet



## What is Norovirus?

Norovirus is an intestinal illness caused by a virus known as Norwalk virus. Sometimes this condition is referred to as “winter vomiting bug” due to its seasonality and typical symptoms. However, it can occur at any time.

## What are the signs and symptoms?

Symptoms often begin with the sudden onset of nausea followed by projectile vomiting, watery diarrhoea and stomach cramps. However, not all of those infected will experience all of these symptoms. Some people may also have a raised temperature, headaches and aching limbs.

Symptoms usually start around 12 to 48 hours after becoming infected. Symptoms will last for 12 to 60 hours.

Most people make a full recovery within 1-2 days, however some people (usually the very young or elderly) may become very dehydrated and require hospital treatment.

For more information please visit NHS Choices:  
<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Norovirus/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

## What is the treatment for Norovirus?

There is no specific treatment for norovirus apart from letting the illness run its course. It is important to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration and not to take Imodium.

## Can Norovirus be spread to other people?

Yes. Once you have the virus, it will start to be excreted in your faeces a few hours before you have any symptoms. Therefore, you are infectious and can pass it onto other people before you feel ill. It will continue to be excreted for up to 10 days, although you are most infectious between 24 and 72 hours after you have been exposed to the virus.

## How can the spread be prevented?

Good hand washing is the single most important infection prevention and control measure. Especially after using the toilet.



Clothing, bed linen, towels etc. should be washed at 60°C or above if possible or at 40°C using washing powder that contains bleach in order to destroy norovirus.

Cleaning around the home should be carried out with bleach.

Particular attention should be given to:

- Washbasins
- Baths
- Toilet seat and handles
- Showers
- Any surface which comes into contact with the hands e.g. door handles, telephones, keyboards.

It is important to use a clean cloth each time to prevent surface being re-infected.

Disposable cleaning cloths or washing the cloth at 60°C or above. Also:

- Do not visit anyone whilst you have symptoms.
- Ask your friends and family not to visit whilst you are feeling unwell.
- Do not serve food to other people whilst you have symptoms of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, and for at least 48 hours after your symptoms have ceased.
- Children must not return to school/nursery and adults not return to work until 48 hours have passed since the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.

## Are there any long term effects from having Norovirus?

No. There are no long term effects from contracting Norovirus. However you do not build up any immunity to Norovirus so therefore you can contract it more than once.

For further advice either speak to the nurse looking after you, GP or contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team on 01502 445361

More Information:

NHS Website: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/norovirus](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/norovirus)

## Compliments, concerns or complaints

Tel: 01502 445447

Email: [patientliaison@ecchcic.nhs.uk](mailto:patientliaison@ecchcic.nhs.uk) or to:

PALS, East Coast Community Healthcare,  
Hamilton House, Battery Green Road,  
Lowestoft, NR32 1DE

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