

How can I avoid getting norovirus

- You need to be aware that it can be spread in the air by droplet infection, if the person is vomiting.
- The toilet used by someone who is ill, is likely to be contaminated. This needs to be cleaned using gloves, after use with a weak bleach solution (1:10).
- Use a different toilet, where possible, from the one used by the person suffering from norovirus.
- Thorough handwashing technique.

Top tips for good handwashing

- Remove jewellery and roll up sleeves or push your jumper up to avoid getting your clothes wet.
- Wet hands first and then apply liquid soap. Soap can be irritating if applied to dry skin.
- Rub palm to palm first then the back of your hands.
- With palms together, rub between fingers then rub the backs of fingers

by interlocking with opposing palm. Do not forget your thumbs.

- Rub the ends of your fingers of one hand in a rotational movement on one palm. Repeat with the opposite hand. The whole process should take at least 30 seconds, a slow recital of “happy birthday” about two times.
- Apply moisturiser regularly when you are able to keep your skin in good condition.

Useful websites: <http://www.hpa.org.uk/>

Type in hand hygiene into the search box

You can contact Public Health, Wiltshire Council in the following ways:

Telephone: 0300 003 4566

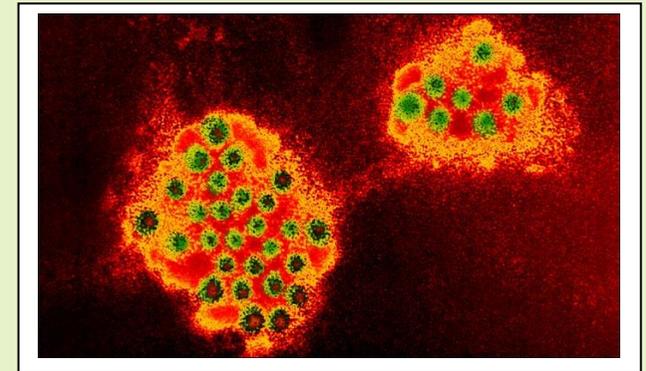
Email: PublicHealth@wiltshire.gov.uk

Web: www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Information about Wiltshire Council services can be made available on request in other languages including BSL and formats such as large print and audio. Please contact the council by telephone 0300 456 0100, by textphone 01225 712500, or email customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

NOROVIRUS

What it is, how to avoid it and what to do should you develop it



What is norovirus?

Noroviruses are a group of viruses that are the most common cause of gastroenteritis (stomach bugs) in England and Wales. In the past, noroviruses have also been called 'winter vomiting viruses', 'small round structured viruses' or 'Norwalk-like viruses.'

It is often known as the winter vomiting bug or virus.

How does norovirus spread?

The virus is easily transmitted from one person to another. It can be transmitted by contact with an infected person; by consuming contaminated food or water or by contact with contaminated surfaces or objects, such as door handles.

What are the symptoms?

- If you have become infected by the virus, symptoms will develop within 12 to 48 hours.
- The illness is self limiting, which means that it normally stops or ends without any treatment.
- The symptoms will last anything from 12 hours to 60 hours.
- They often start with the sudden onset of nausea followed by vomiting which may be projectile and watery diarrhoea.

- Some people may have a raised temperature, headaches and aching limbs. Most people make a full recovery within 1-2 days. Some people (usually the very young or elderly) may become very dehydrated and require hospital treatment.

How is it treated?

There is no specific treatment for norovirus. Let the illness run its course and get plenty of rest. It is important to drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated.

If symptoms persists more than a few days, ring your GP or the NHS non emergency number 111

Why does norovirus cause outbreaks?

Norovirus often causes outbreaks because it is so easily passed on from one person to another.

The virus is able to survive in the environment for many days.

There are many different strains of norovirus and although someone may build up immunity, this is short-lived. This means you can get the same strain within the same season.

Outbreaks usually tend to affect people who are in semi- closed environments, such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools and cruise ships.

If I have norovirus, how can I prevent others from getting it?

- If you are suffering from norovirus, you need to wash your hands thoroughly after visiting the toilet with soap and water. Hand gels are not effective.
- If you have symptoms, you should avoid preparing food until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.
- If you need to contact your GP surgery, ring rather than visit as this will avoid you coming into contact with other vulnerable people and spreading the virus.
- Avoid mixing with others for about 48 hours, to ensure you are over the illness and to avoid spreading it to others.
- Avoid visiting relatives and friends in hospital if you are not feeling very well.