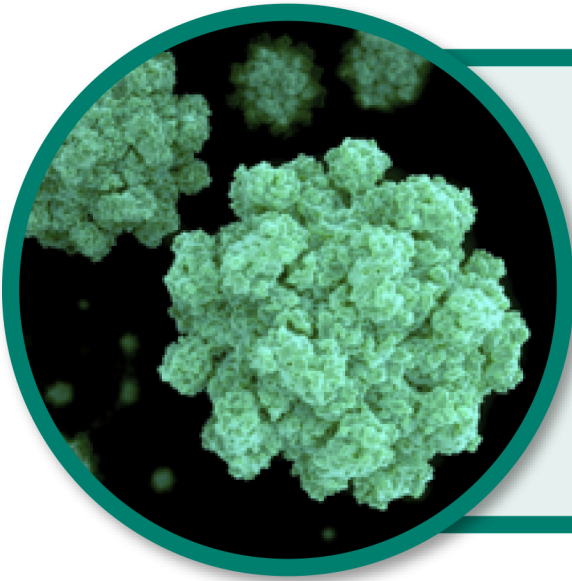


# FACT SHEET

# NOROVIRUS

*Norovirus is the most common cause of acute gastroenteritis in the United States. Each year, it cause 19-21 million illness and contributes to 56,000-71,000 hospitalizations and 570-800 deaths. Norovirus is highly contagious and can withstand high temperatures making it the most common cause of foodborne illness outbreaks in the United States.*



**SOURCES:** Contaminated food or water, often by touching ready-to-eat foods served in restaurants with their bare hand, or by touching contaminated surfaces.

**INCUBATION PERIOD:** 12-48 hours.

**SYMPTOMS:** Diarrhea, throwing up, nausea, stomach pain, fever, headache, body aches.

**DURATION:** 24-60 hours.

**WHAT DO I DO?:** Drink plenty of fluids and get rest. If you cannot drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration or if your symptoms are severe, call your doctor. Oral rehydration fluids that you can get over the counter are most helpful for dehydration.

## Simple food handling practices can help prevent *Norovirus* infections:

- Wash your hands carefully with soap and water — especially after using the toilet and changing diapers, and always before eating, preparing, or handling food.
- Carefully wash fruits and vegetables before preparing and eating them. Cook oysters and other shellfish thoroughly before eating them.
- Be aware that Noroviruses are relatively resistant. They can survive temperatures as high as 140°F and quick steaming processes that are often used for cooking shellfish.
- Food that might be contaminated with Norovirus should be thrown out.
- Keep sick infants and children out of areas where food is being handled and prepared.
- You should not prepare food for others or provide healthcare while you are sick and for at least 3 days after symptoms stop. This also applies to sick workers in settings such as schools and daycares where they may expose people to Norovirus.
- Many local and state health departments require that food workers and preparers with Norovirus illness not work until at least 48 hours after symptoms stop. If you were recently sick, you can be given different duties in the restaurant, such as working at a cash register or hosting.



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