



# NOROVIRUS (STOMACH BUG) FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

Some cases of norovirus, or the stomach bug, have been reported from your child's school or classroom. Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that can lead to diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pain. Norovirus illness can be known by other names, such as food poisoning and stomach flu. Anyone can get norovirus. Between 19 and 21 million cases are reported each year.

## HOW DOES THE NOROVIRUS SPREAD?

Norovirus spreads very easily and quickly, as it doesn't take much exposure to make you sick. Individuals remain contagious from the moment they begin feeling sick through the first few days after recovery.

Norovirus can spread to others by:

- Having direct contact with an infected person, such as touching an infected person while caring for them.
- Eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus.
- Touching objects that have norovirus on them and then putting your fingers in your mouth.
- Sharing utensils or cups with people who are infected with norovirus.

Remember the correct way to wash your hands. Apply soap. Rub your hands together to create a lather and scrub well for at least 20 seconds. Rinse hands well under running water. Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

## HOW TO PREVENT NOROVIRUS?

Use the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations:

1. Practice proper hand hygiene.
2. Wash fruits and vegetables and cook seafood thoroughly. Keep sick infants and children out of areas where food is being handled and prepared.
3. When you are sick, do not prepare food or care for others. And after recovery, wait for another 2 to 3 days as you may still be contagious.
4. Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces using a chlorine bleach solution or other disinfectant registered as effective against norovirus by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
5. Wash laundry thoroughly. Immediately remove and wash clothes or linens that may be contaminated with vomit or stool (feces). Handle these items carefully without agitating them. Wear rubber or disposable gloves while handling soiled items and wash your hands after. Wash the items with detergent at the maximum available cycle length and then machine dry them.

## RESOURCES

[cdc.gov/norovirus](https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus)