

Healthcare Staff Information

No to Norovirus!



How to help keep the
Norovirus (Vomiting Bug)
out of the Health Service



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Norovirus is a common cause of gastroenteritis. It is known as the 'winter vomiting bug' but can be contracted at any time of year. It does not usually cause serious illness, but it is very easily spread. People who contract it can be infectious for at least 48 hours after they recover.

To reduce the likelihood of spread of norovirus it is important to remember the following:

- If you become aware of a member of staff or a patient who is vomiting, alert your clinical nurse manager or supervisor.
- Any soiling due to vomiting should be immediately cleaned up and the area decontaminated*
- Wash your hands regularly with hot water and soap before and after every patient contact, after using the toilet and when touching food. (Alcohol gel on its own is not sufficient)
- If you have a bout of vomiting or diarrhoea:

- **At work:** report it to your supervisor immediately and go home.

And remain off work until you have been well for 48 hours

- **At home:** stay at home

- When in doubt, seek advice from a member of the Infection Control Team.

* When 2 or more people in the same area have vomited, it is possible that they may be part of a norovirus outbreak. If this is suspected, the hospital Infection Control Team will become involved.

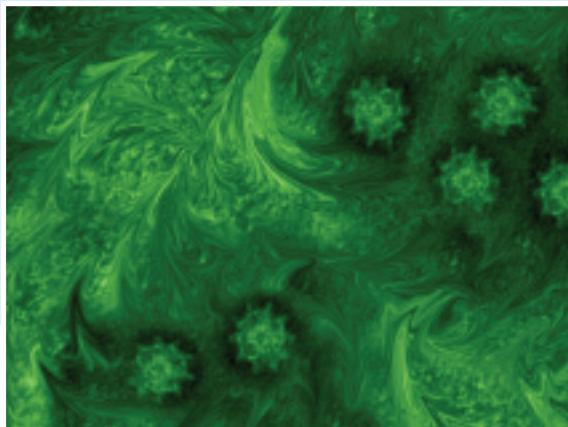


Image of Norovirus Courtesy of Pat Costigan at NVRL.

At home:

If you or a family member has symptoms of vomiting/diarrhoea:

- Use hot water and detergent to clean up any soiling and wash your hands thoroughly afterwards.
- There is no specific treatment for norovirus apart from sipping plenty of clear fluids such as water or flat lemonade.
- Symptoms will usually last only a day or two but can, occasionally last longer.
- If you are concerned (e.g. prolonged vomiting/diarrhoea especially in small children and elderly people), telephone your GP for advice.

*For further information see National Guidelines On The Management Of Outbreaks Of Norovirus Infection In Healthcare Settings available at **www.hpsc.ie***