



# FACT SHEET

# Norovirus



South East  
**IPAC**  
HUB & SPOKE



EDUCATION  
PRACTICE  
POLICY  
PARTNERS

Quinte | Rural Hastings | Rural Frimley | Lennox & Addington | Lanark, Leeds & Grenville

## What is Norovirus?

- Norovirus is a **highly** contagious virus that causes gastroenteritis, otherwise known as inflammation of a person’s gastrointestinal system
- It is a leading cause of vomiting, diarrhea and foodborne illness
- Norovirus is often mistaken for “stomach flu” or “stomach bug” but it is not related to influenza (the flu)

## How is Norovirus spread?

Typically spread through the **fecal-oral route**:

- ① **Direct contact** with someone infected
- ② Consuming food or drinks contaminated with the virus
- ③ **Indirect contact** with surfaces of items contaminated with the virus and then touching mouth, nose or eyes

## Norovirus Symptoms

- The incubation period of norovirus is 12-48 hours after exposure
- Symptoms normally appear very suddenly

Common symptoms include:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Stomach pain

Additional symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Headache
- Body aches

### How long can symptoms last?

- Symptoms typically last **1 to 3 days**
- Individuals can still be contagious for several days after symptom resolution

## How to PREVENT Norovirus



### Hand Hygiene

- Promote hand washing for staff, residents & visitors



### Environmental Cleaning

- Check for norovirus kill claim on products
- Focus on high-touch surfaces
- Dedicate shared equipment where possible
- Review cleaning/disinfection program



### Education and Awareness

- Educate staff, residents and visitors about importance of adherence to IPAC practices (hand hygiene, cleaning/disinfection, PPE use)

### Additional Precautions

- Implement contact precautions for confirmed or suspected cases
- Consider droplet & contact precautions as the use of eye protection and a mask can eliminate unpredictable exposure to splashes or sprays of stool and/or vomit



## Outbreak Preparedness & Management

- Understand outbreak definitions
- Report outbreak to public health
- Ensure sufficient PPE supply
- Increased surveillance for case monitoring
- Identify potential visitor restrictions
- Review staff return to work policy
- Ensure supply of enteric testing kits
- Stay home when sick!

