

KEY MESSAGES

- Avoid visiting healthcare facilities, like hospitals or care homes if you have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting until 48 hours after symptoms have stopped (even if these were mild symptoms). There is a real risk that you could introduce the infection to the area you are visiting. If your visit is essential please inform staff prior to or on arrival so they will be aware you either have or have had symptoms.
- Avoid visiting friends or relatives in hospital or care homes if you have provided care to or had recent contact with others who have had diarrhoea and/or vomiting in the last 48 hours. Think about telephoning as an alternative.
- Wash your hands frequently with warm water and soap. You should always do this after using the toilet and before preparing food. This is good practice whether or not you have symptoms.
- Do not handle or prepare food for other people until you have been free of symptoms for a minimum of 48 hours.

If you or someone you care for needs medical advice call NHS 111 or your GP

Surgery

If you would like this leaflet in a different language, larger print size, in audio, Braille or any other format please **contact the PALS team:**

by phone on 01905 760020

by letter to:

Communications,
Worcestershire Health and Care Trust,
2 Kings Court, Charles Hastings Way,
Worcester. WR5 1JR

or by email:

WHCNHS.Communications@nhs.net

NHS

Worcestershire
Health and Care
NHS Trust

Infection
Control

HELP US TO COMBAT NOROVIRUS

WHAT IS NOROVIRUS?

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

**WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP
STOP THIS SPREAD?**



HELP COMBAT THE SPREAD OF NOROVIRUS, PROTECT THOSE WHO ARE VULNERABLE AND SUPPORT HEALTHCARE SERVICES.

PLEASE READ THIS LEAFLET AND FOLLOW THE ADVICE.

What is Norovirus?

Norovirus is the most common cause of infectious gastroenteritis (stomach bug) in England and Wales and can affect people of any age. It is sometimes called the 'winter vomiting bug'.

Whilst this condition is an unpleasant experience, the infection tends to be short lived and most people will just need to drink plenty of fluids and take plenty of rest.

However, people who are already ill or vulnerable, such as patients in hospital or residents in care homes, can sometimes become quite poorly as the illness can interfere with the effectiveness of the medicines they are taking and also make them weak and dehydrated.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are feeling sick (nausea) often followed by vomiting (which can be projectile), and watery diarrhoea. Some people may also have a raised temperature, headaches, painful stomach cramps and aching limbs. However, not all people infected will have all of these symptoms.

Symptoms of norovirus start around 12 to 48 hours after the individual becomes infected. The illness is self limiting with symptoms usually lasting 12 to 60 hours.

Most people make a full recovery within 1-2 days, however some people (usually the very young or elderly) may become very dehydrated and require hospital treatment, therefore it is important to ensure people drink plenty of fluids.

How does Norovirus spread?

The virus is easily spread from one infected person to another person. Sometimes the virus can be spread through food preparation or water or by contact with contaminated surfaces or objects.

Public places like hospitals and care homes are susceptible to outbreaks and this may result in ward/care home closures.

What can I do to help stop the spread of infection?

To help stop the spread of infection and protect vulnerable patients in hospital and residents in care homes and enable effective management of health and care services over the winter period, please follow the key messages overleaf.