

Dear parents!

A Norovirus-outbreak has started during your child was staying in XXX. Therefore some informations about Norovirus-infection and prevention measures at home for the following days after your child is coming back home:

What are noroviruses?

Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause the “stomach flu,” or gastroenteritis in human.

What are the symptoms of illness caused by noroviruses?

The symptoms of norovirus illness usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and some stomach cramping. The illness begins suddenly, and the infected person may feel very sick. The illness is usually brief, with symptoms lasting only about 1 or 2 days.

How serious is norovirus disease?

Norovirus disease is usually not serious, although people may feel very sick and vomit many times a day. Most people get better within 1 or 2 days, and they have no long-term health effects related to their illness.

How do people become infected with noroviruses?

Noroviruses are found in the stool or vomit of infected people. People can become infected with the virus in several ways, including: eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus; touching surfaces or objects contaminated with norovirus, and then placing their hand in their mouth; having direct contact with another person who is infected and showing symptoms.

When do symptoms appear?

Symptoms of norovirus illness usually begin about 24 to 48 hours after ingestion of the virus, but they can appear as early as 12 hours after exposure. So an illness can appear back at home also.

Are noroviruses contagious?

Noroviruses are very contagious and can spread easily from person to person. Both stool and vomit are infectious.

How long are people contagious?

People infected with norovirus are contagious from the moment they begin feeling ill to at least 3 days after recovery. Some people may be contagious for as long as 2 weeks after recovery. Therefore, it is particularly important for people to practice good handwashing and other hygienic practices after they have recently recovered from norovirus illness. **Please explain these your child, if she/he was ill or will become ill.**

Who gets norovirus infection?

Anyone can become infected with these viruses.

What treatment is available for people with norovirus infection?

Currently, there is no antiviral medication that works against norovirus and there is no vaccine to prevent infection. By drinking oral rehydration fluids (ORF), juice, or water, people can reduce their chance of becoming dehydrated. Sports drinks do not replace the nutrients and minerals lost during this illness.

Can norovirus infections be prevented?

Yes. You can decrease your chance of coming in contact with noroviruses by following these preventive steps:

- **Frequently wash your hands, especially after toilet visits and changing diapers and before eating or preparing food.**
- **How to wash your hands: Wet your hands with warm water. Apply a generous amount of soap. Rub hands together for 20 seconds. Rinse hands. Use paper-towels or change towels frequently.**
- **Carefully wash fruits and vegetables, and steam oysters before eating them.**
- **Thoroughly clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces immediately after an episode of illness by using a bleach-based household cleaner (e.g. 10% solution of household bleach) or ask for a specialized disinfectant. Use one-way-gloves, an one-way-apron, tight-fitting protection goggles and face mask (FFP2). Cover yourself too if you assist a person for eg. during vomiting, so you do not inhale contaminated aerosols.**
- **Immediately remove and wash clothing or linens that may be contaminated with virus after an episode of illness (use hot water more than 60°C and soap).**
- **Flush or discard any vomitus and/or stool in the toilet and make sure that the surrounding area is kept clean and disinfected.**

Persons who are infected with norovirus should not prepare food while they have symptoms and for 3 days after they recover from their illness. Food that may have been contaminated by an ill person should be disposed of properly.

Your Public-Health Officer

These informations are based on a recommendation of CDC/Atlanta