



**DO NOT** use the toilets on the ward; use the public visitors' toilets.

**DO NOT** bring children to visit as it is hard for them to comply with these measures.

Patients' own clothing that is taken home should be washed separately on the hottest cycle the fabric can withstand.

**DO NOT** prepare food for other people while you are ill.

*Thank you for your understanding.*

For more information on norovirus, please visit:

[www.worcsacute.nhs.uk](http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk)



**PULL TOGETHER TO  
PREVENT INFECTION**

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# Norovirus get the facts

advice for staff,  
patients and visitors



**If you've been sick or had diarrhoea in the last 48 hours, please avoid coming into hospital.**

## What is norovirus?

Noroviruses are a group of viruses that commonly cause gastroenteritis. The illness they cause is also known as the 'winter vomiting bug'.

## What are the symptoms?

The symptoms include the sudden onset of nausea followed by projectile vomiting and diarrhoea. Some people might get a high temperature, headaches and aching limbs. Not all people affected by Norovirus experience all of the symptoms.

Symptoms usually begin 12-48 hours after becoming infected. Most people fully recover within one or two days, but some people (especially the very young, elderly or those with an existing medical condition) may become dehydrated and require hospital treatment.

## Why does Norovirus cause outbreaks?

The virus is easily transmitted from one person to another, by direct contact, by consuming contaminated food or water, or by contact with contaminated surfaces or objects. It can survive well in the environment, and the amount of virus needed to cause infection is very small.

## How can outbreaks be stopped?

The most effective way to respond to an outbreak of Norovirus in hospital is the isolation of affected patients until they are symptom free. In addition, it is important to clean and disinfect the affected area and ensure good hygiene measures are in place, for example thorough hand washing and scrupulous food hygiene.

Anyone who has the symptoms of Norovirus should avoid contact with others for a minimum of 48 hours after their symptoms have stopped. If you have had Norovirus you should not go to work until you have been symptom free for 48 hours.

## How is Norovirus treated?

There is no specific treatment for Norovirus apart from letting the illness run its course. It is important to drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.



## Advice for patients and visitors:

Good hand hygiene measures are particularly important. It is vital to wash your hands thoroughly using soap and water, followed by use of the available hand gel:

- When entering and leaving any area where patients are present
- After using the toilet
- Before meals

**DO NOT** visit the hospital if you have had diarrhoea or vomiting within the last 48 hours. People can remain infectious for varying periods after the symptoms have stopped.