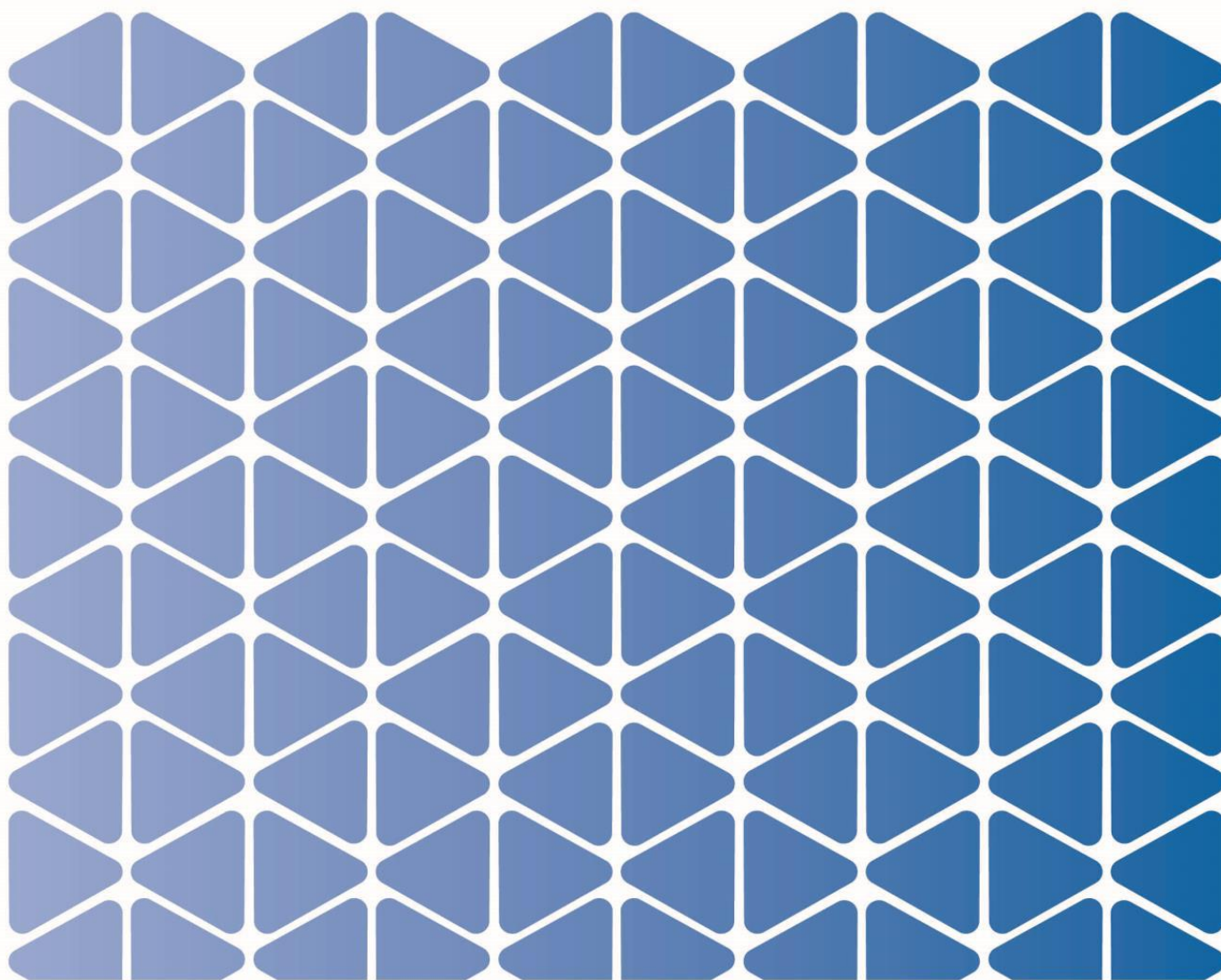


## PATIENT INFORMATION

# **NOROVIRUS – GET THE FACTS**

## **ADVICE FOR STAFF, PATIENTS AND VISITORS**



## **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 very 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 hand hygiene measures are in place.

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.

## **Hand Hygiene advice**

Good hand hygiene measures are particularly important. It is vital to wash your hands thoroughly using soap and water.

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

## **Visitors:**

**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

**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  
Patient's 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 if you are ill.

Thank you for understanding

**If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.**

### **Patient Experience**

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

### **Feedback**

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

### **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

### **How to contact PALS:**

**Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: [wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net)**

### **Opening times:**

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.