

NOROVIRUS

(Norwalk-like virus, cruise ship diarrhea, winter vomiting disease)

<i>What is the disease?</i>	A diarrheal illness caused by a group of viruses. It is a common source of outbreaks associated with food service.
<i>How is it spread?</i>	It is usually spread from an infected person's unwashed hands touching food that another person eats (fecal/oral route). Also, by contaminated food or contaminated environment (faucets, doorknobs).
<i>What is the incubation period?</i>	The time from exposure to onset of symptoms is usually 24-48 hours with a range of 10-50 hours.
<i>What are the early signs?</i>	Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea, abdominal cramps, muscle aches, and sometimes a low-grade fever. Symptoms are self-limiting; they go away after 24-72 hours.
<i>What about contacts?</i>	Contacts should stay home. They should not share or prepare or serve food to others until 48 hours after symptoms end. They should drink fluids and stay in bed.
<i>How long is the person contagious?</i>	A person is able to spread the disease as long as he/she has symptoms and up to 48 hours after symptoms end. Good hand washing is a must!
<i>When is it OK to return to school?</i>	Children may return to school once they are free of symptoms and feel well enough to participate in class. Encourage good hand washing before meals.
<i>What else should I know?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no medicine for this disease. A virus causes this illness, so antibiotics don't work against it. • Wash hands after using the bathroom or changing diapers and before eating or preparing food. Wash hands with warm soapy water for 15-20 seconds. Scrub between fingers and under nails. Use paper towel to turn off faucet and open restroom door. • Do not send a sick child to school!

This fact sheet is not intended to replace the advice of your physician. Parents should contact their healthcare provider if they have concerns regarding their child's health. If you have general questions, you may contact a Kalamazoo County nurse at 373-5264 or 373-5267.

Rev .02/2006; upd 09/2007