

Oakland County Health Division

Norovirus—Reduce the Risk

Norovirus is the most common cause of stomach illness this time of the year and this year is no exception. Recent outbreaks serve as an important reminder to take precautions to avoid the spread of illness. Proper hand hygiene and sanitation of surfaces is key to avoid getting sick.

Noroviruses are very contagious and spread rapidly from person to person. They are found in the stool or vomit of infected people. People can become infected with the virus by eating contaminated foods or liquids; touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then placing fingers in the eyes, nose or mouth.

Symptoms of infection usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and some stomach cramping. People may also have low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and a general sense of tiredness. Symptoms may appear from 24 to 48 hours after contact, but they can appear as early as 12 hours after exposure.

To reduce the risk of contracting norovirus:

- Wash hands frequently, especially after using the bathroom, changing diapers and before preparing and eating food. Rub hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds.
- Contaminated surfaces such as toilets, doorknobs, countertops, and changing tables should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before using a bleach-based household cleaner. See the Oakland County Health Division [Norovirus](#) fact sheet for instructions on preparing a disinfectant using household bleach.
- Do not prepare food if you have symptoms, and avoid food preparation for at least three days after symptoms have ended.
- Wash any clothing, bedding items or other linens that may be contaminated.

For more information, call Oakland County Health Division's Nurse on Call at 1-800-848-5533 or visit www.oakgov.com/health.