

Prevention

Long-term care facilities, assisted living, and skilled nursing facilities should restrict ill residents from leaving their room until 48 hours after their symptoms resolve to reduce the risk of further spread (unless it is for essential care or treatment). Consider suspending group activities for the duration of the outbreak. Exclude ill staff, especially those with patient care and food handling responsibilities, until 48 hours after symptoms resolve to help reduce further spread. Staff who work at multiple healthcare facilities should eliminate or minimize inter-facility movement during the duration of the outbreak. Additionally, enforcing exclusion policies for visitors will help prevent further spread.

Childcare centers and schools should educate staff and children on proper hand hygiene. Facilities should assist younger children with washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Any staff, childcare attendee, or student with symptoms of norovirus infection should be sent home and not return until 48 hours after symptoms resolve to help prevent further spread.

Environmental surfaces should be disinfected using a chlorine bleach solution with a concentration of 1,000-5,000 ppm (5-25 tablespoons of household bleach [5-8 %] per gallon of water) or other disinfectants effective against norovirus (<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-g-epa-registered-hospital-disinfectants-effective-against-norovirus>).

The following general recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can help prevent outbreaks from occurring:

- Practice proper hand hygiene: wash hands carefully with soap and water especially after using the toilet and changing diapers, and always before eating, preparing, or handling food. You can use alcohol-based hand sanitizers in addition to hand washing, but you should not use hand sanitizer as a substitute for washing your hands with soap and water. Hand sanitizers aren't as effective as washing hands with soap and water at removing norovirus particles.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces: Check the labels on your cleaning products to ensure they are effective against norovirus. Clean up vomitus and diarrheal incidents immediately using the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including gloves and a protective gown. Immediately remove and wash soiled clothes or linens that may be contaminated with vomit or feces using rubber or disposable gloves. Wash the items with detergent and hot water at the maximum cycle length and machine dry them at the highest heat setting.
- Exclude sick staff and children: All ill staff and children should be sent home from the facility for at least 48 hours after symptoms resolve. Persons with symptoms of norovirus infection should avoid food preparation and serving while sick and for at least 2 days following resolution of symptoms. Keep sick infants and children out of areas where food is being handled and prepared.

Reporting Norovirus Outbreaks

Any facility with two or more suspected norovirus ill persons within 72 hours should report the suspected outbreak to their local health department:

[Map of local health departments by county](#) and [List of local health department contacts](#).

When reporting to your local health department, please report the following information:

- Name and setting of your facility
- First ill date (onset of symptoms for first case-patient)
- Symptoms (diarrhea, vomiting, etc.)
- Illness duration (example: illness resolves within 24 hours)
- Number of people showing symptoms (estimated at the time of initial report)
- Suspected mode of transmission (example: person-to-person)