

Outbreaks of diarrhoea and vomiting

Single
Point
Lesson

Norovirus, also known as winter vomiting disease, causes gastroenteritis and is highly infectious. The virus is easily transmitted through contact with infected individuals from one person to another. Outbreaks are common in schools and nurseries. Outbreaks are defined as 2 or more linked cases.

Symptoms of Norovirus.

Symptoms shouldn't last for more than a couple of days.
Patient may have diarrhoea and/or vomiting.
Abdominal pain and fever may be present.
Child may have aching arms and legs.
Symptoms usually occur 24 to 48 hours after being exposed.
Recovery is usually within 1 to 3 days.



Treatment

Stay at home and get plenty of rest. Keep children away from school for at least 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea/vomiting. Ensure children do not become dehydrated by offering sips of fluid at regular intervals. Do not give children medicine to stop diarrhoea. Let children eat when they feel able to do so.

Infection Control advice

Deploy 48 hour exclusion rule for ill children and staff.
Staff to check/encourage/supervise hand washing in children especially before meal and snack times and after using the toilet.
Ensure ample stocks of liquid soap and paper towels.
Implement enhanced cleaning especially of high risk areas (toilet areas especially taps, flush handles, door plates) with an appropriate disinfectant which contains hypochlorite i.e. sterilising fluid.
Ensure all toys, and play equipment are cleaned using an appropriate detergent.
Ensure that any diarrhoea and vomiting spillage is cleaned appropriately. Any contaminated carpets should be cleaned with a steam cleaner.
Staff to use disposable aprons and gloves when cleaning the environment and equipment and also when clearing any body fluids spillages.
Suspend use of soft toys plus water/sand, play doh and cookery activities during outbreak.
Ensure all shared food is suspended. i.e. fruit bowls, Communal plates at snack time.
Inform the Infection Control team if you think you may have an outbreak. **Infection Control team – 01744 457 314.**