

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

## NOROVIRUS

### What are Noroviruses?

Noroviruses are a group of viruses that cause gastroenteritis (stomach flu) in people.

### What are the signs and symptoms of a Norovirus infection?

Symptoms are nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and fatigue. Dehydration, especially in infants and the elderly, may occur.

### How is Norovirus spread?

Noroviruses are found in the stool or vomit of infected people. Consuming contaminated food or liquids, touching contaminated surfaces and then placing hands in the mouth, and direct contact with an infected person spread the disease. The virus is highly contagious.

### What is the incubation period of Norovirus and how long is it contagious?

Symptoms usually begin 24 to 48 hours after infection, but can appear as early as 12 hours after exposure. Recovery time is usually 1-2 days after exposure, but a person is still considered contagious three days after they recover from their illness.

### What should I do if I think I have a Norovirus infection?

Currently, there are no medications or vaccine for the virus. Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Outbreaks are reportable to the local Health Department.

### How can I prevent myself and others from getting a Norovirus infection?

Overall studies suggest that proper hand washing with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce norovirus contamination on the hands. Hand sanitizers might serve as an effective deterrent in between proper hand washing but should not be considered a substitute for soap and water hand washing. Prevention includes careful hand washing with soap and water after using the toilet, changing diapers, and before eating and preparing food. Carefully wash fruit and vegetables, steam oysters, thoroughly clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces, wash contaminated clothing, and flush or discard any vomitus and/or stool. For more information, please contact the Florida Department of Health in Orange County Epidemiology Program at 407-858-1420. You may also visit the Epidemiology Program website, <http://orchd.com/generalHealth/epidemiology/index.asp>, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website, <http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/index.html>, or the OCHD School Health website at <http://orchd.com/personalHealth/schoolHealth/index.asp> for additional information.

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