

# PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF NOROVIRUS

## (Winter Vomiting Virus) - Information leaflet

### WHAT IS NOROVIRUS?

Norovirus is a frequent cause of diarrhoea and vomiting in the community and is most common during the winter. It is sometimes called "Winter Vomiting Virus".

### WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Norovirus causes symptoms of "gastric flu". It lasts 2-3 days and the person will have diarrhoea and/or vomiting. Some people may have raised temperature, headaches & aching limbs. The illness is usually mild and antibiotics have no effect.

### PREVENTING THE SPREAD

Although it is not always possible to prevent getting a norovirus, good hygiene can help to limit the spread of the infection.

There are some practical steps that you can follow to help stop a norovirus spreading, some of which are outlined below.

- **Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly**, particularly after using the toilet, and before preparing food.
- **Disinfect any surfaces or objects that could be contaminated with a norovirus**. It is best to use a bleach-based household cleaner. Always follow the instructions on the cleaning product.
- **Avoid eating raw, unwashed produce**, and only eat oysters from a reliable source, because they have been known to carry the norovirus.
- **Flush away any infected faeces or vomit** in the toilet. You should also keep the surrounding toilet area clean and hygienic.
- **Wash any clothing, or linens, which could have become contaminated with norovirus**. Washing with hot, soapy water will help to ensure that the virus is killed.

### IF YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM NOROVIRUS

**Do not attend your medical centre**, unless you require medical attention for another condition. If your symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting last longer than 4 days please [telephone](#) your medical centre for advice.

### ADVICE FOR SCHOOLS

Any child or teacher with diarrhoea or vomiting should be excluded from school until 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting. Exclusion from swimming should be for at least 2 weeks following the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.

### GETTING MORE INFORMATION

**You can get further advice and information by** contacting a doctor or nurse at your Medical Centre.

**Other sources of information about health and health care:**

#### **Health Protection Agency**

Website: [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)

**Patient UK** provides leaflets on health and disease translated into 11 other languages as well as links to national support/self help groups and a directory of UK health websites.

Website: [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

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