



# Norovirus (vomiting bug)

## Information for patients, visitors and staff

**Norovirus, also called the "winter vomiting bug", is a stomach bug that causes vomiting and diarrhoea. It can be very unpleasant, but usually goes away in about two days.**

### Check if you have norovirus

The main symptoms of norovirus are:

- feeling sick (nausea)
- diarrhoea
- being sick (vomiting)

You may also have:

- a high temperature
- a headache
- aching arms and legs

The symptoms start suddenly within 1 to 2 days of being infected.

The illness is usually mild in nature and gets better without antibiotics.

### How to treat norovirus yourself

You can usually treat yourself or your child at home.

The most important thing is to rest and have lots of fluids to avoid dehydration.

You will usually start to feel better in 2 to 3 days.

### Important: School, nursery or work

This infection spreads very easily in schools and hospitals due to the close contact between students, patients and staff.

Large numbers of individuals can be involved, and it is important to stop the illness from spreading in any environment such as the hospital or to relatives and friends.

Stay off school or work until you have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least two days. This is when you are most infectious.

Do not visit hospitals or care homes during this time. If you are a patient, you may be moved to a side room or to an area with other patients with the same illness.



## How norovirus is spread

Norovirus can spread very easily.

You can catch norovirus from:

- close contact with someone with norovirus
- touching surfaces or objects that have the virus on them, then touching your mouth
- eating food that has been prepared or handled by someone with norovirus

Washing your hands frequently with soap and water is the best way to stop it spreading.

Alcohol hand gels do not kill norovirus.

## If your symptoms get worse, or you do not get better

Visit [111.nhs.uk](https://111.nhs.uk) or call 111 if you are concerned or if you are dehydrated, with bloody diarrhoea or dry nappy, or under 12 months old.

Additional information can be found on NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact the Infection Control team on 020 7288 3679

The information in this leaflet has been sourced from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/norovirus/>

## Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or [whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net)

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet please email [whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net](mailto:whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net). We will try our best to meet your needs.

Twitter.com/WhitHealth  
Facebook.com/WhittingtonHealth

Whittington Health NHS Trust  
Magdala Avenue  
London  
N19 5NF  
Phone: 020 7272 3070  
[www.whittington.nhs.uk](https://www.whittington.nhs.uk)

Date published: 26/06/2024  
Review date: 26/06/2026  
Ref: GEN/NPE/IPCNorovir/01

© Whittington Health  
Please recycle

