

Norovirus and Sapovirus

What are Norovirus and Sapovirus?

- Norovirus and Sapovirus are viruses that affect the stomach and intestines.
- This illness is sometimes called “food poisoning” or “stomach flu.”
- You can get these viruses more than once.

How do they spread?

- Person-to-Person: Caring for sick people (vomiting and diarrhea) or when sharing food, drinks, or eating utensils with a sick person.
- Food-to-Person: Eating food or drinking liquids handled by a sick person.
- Surface-to-Person: Touching a surface or object handled by a sick person and touching your mouth.

What are the symptoms?

- You may get stomach cramping, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- Illness often begins suddenly.
- Illness is usually not serious and most people recover within 1 or 2 days.
- Severe illness is possible for young children, elderly, and those with health problems.

How do I avoid dehydration?

- Drink liquids after vomiting and diarrhea.
- Adults and children who are not drinking enough liquids have less urine, a dry mouth and throat, and feel dizzy when standing up.
- Children may cry with few or no tears and be more sleepy or fussy.
- If you think your or your family is having these problems, contact your doctor.

Is there a vaccine or treatment?

- There is no vaccine to prevent this illness and no drug to treat ill people.
- Antibiotics will not work for norovirus or sapovirus.

How do I stop the spread?

- Wash your hands with soap and water, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers, before eating, or preparing food.
- Wash and cook food thoroughly before eating them.
- Ill people should not prepare food for 3 days after they stop having symptoms.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces, after contact with sick person, with bleach cleaner or 5–25 tablespoons of bleach in 1 gallon of water.
- Wash clothing, sheets, and towels, after contact with sick person, with soap in the washing machine for the longest cycle and put items in the dryer.

Where can I find more information?

- Go to cdc.gov and type norovirus or sapovirus in SEARCH box.



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