



Norovirus, also known as the winter vomiting bug, is the most common stomach bug in the UK.

What is Norovirus?

Norovirus is highly contagious. It's particularly prevalent in schools and nurseries as the virus can survive for several days on surfaces or objects. But it can affect people of all ages and cause vomiting and diarrhoea. There is no cure for Norovirus, so it has to be left to run its course.

The symptoms are unpleasant and can initially be quite distressing, but they shouldn't last for more than a couple of days. Adults and children with Norovirus symptoms should avoid visiting GP surgeries or hospitals to prevent the further spread of the virus.

Because the virus is highly contagious, children who have Norovirus symptoms must remain off school or nursery for 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea to stop the spread of the infection to other children and staff.

Different types of Norovirus is the most common cause of stomach bugs in the UK, with at least 25 different strains known to affect humans. Each year, it's estimated between 600,000 and 1 million people in the UK catch Norovirus – because there are so many strains, we don't develop immunity to it. The virus is sometimes called the "winter vomiting bug" as it's more common in winter. However, you can catch the virus at any time of the year.

Preventing the spread of Norovirus

- Wash hands thoroughly regularly throughout the day
- Disinfectant surfaces, including the bathroom sink, toilet, door handles and surfaces
- Do not share facecloths or toothbrushes
- Wash contaminated bed linen and clothing

Don't forget the virus can survive on surfaces and objects for several days!

How do you treat Norovirus?

To treat the symptoms of Norovirus, we recommend the following for children and young people:

- Ensure they drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Give them liquid paracetamol for any fever or aches and pains.
- If they feel like eating, give them easy to digest foods such as bananas or brown rice.
- Stay at home – there is nothing the GP can prescribe for sickness and diarrhoea, although your local chemist may be able to provide rehydration solutions.
- Contact your GP or NHS 111 to seek advice if the symptoms last longer than a few days, or visit nhs.uk/norovirus for more information.

**STAY WELL
THIS WINTER**