

# BUG-OF-THE-MONTH

## Norovirus

Norovirus is the **leading cause** of vomiting and diarrhea, and foodborne illness in the United States. People of all ages can get infected and sick with norovirus, which spreads very easily and quickly.

### Signs/Symptoms of Norovirus:

- Norovirus causes inflammation of the stomach or intestines.
- A person usually **develops symptoms 12 to 48 hours** after being exposed to norovirus.
  - *Most people with norovirus illness **get better within 1 to 3 days**, but they can still spread the virus for a few days after.*
- Feel extremely ill, and vomit or have diarrhea many times a day.
  - Lead to dehydration, especially in young children, older adults, and people with other illnesses.
  - **Children** who are dehydrated may cry with few or no tears and be unusually sleepy or fussy.

### How does Norovirus spread?

- Having **direct contact with someone with norovirus**, such as by caring for them, sharing food or eating utensils with them, or eating food handled by them.
- Eating **food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus**.
- **Touching surfaces or objects contaminated** with norovirus and then putting your unwashed fingers in your mouth.



### Health Habits and Prevention

**Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially:**

- **After using the toilet** or changing diapers.
- Before eating, preparing, or **handling food**.
- Before giving yourself or someone else medicine.

It is important to continue washing your hands often **even after you feel better**.

Norovirus can be found in **bodily fluids even before** you start feeling sick.

- The virus can also stay in your system for two weeks or more after you feel better and you can still spread norovirus during that time.

**Hand sanitizer does not work well against norovirus.**

- You can use hand sanitizers in addition to hand washing, but hand sanitizer is not a substitute for handwashing.