

If they help with your care they will be encouraged to wear gloves and aprons.

Any soiled clothing should be transported home in a plastic carrier bag and washed separately on the highest setting that the fabric can be washed at.

Household gloves should be worn when handling soiled washing and should be rinsed after use with soap and water and hands thoroughly washed and dried after removal.

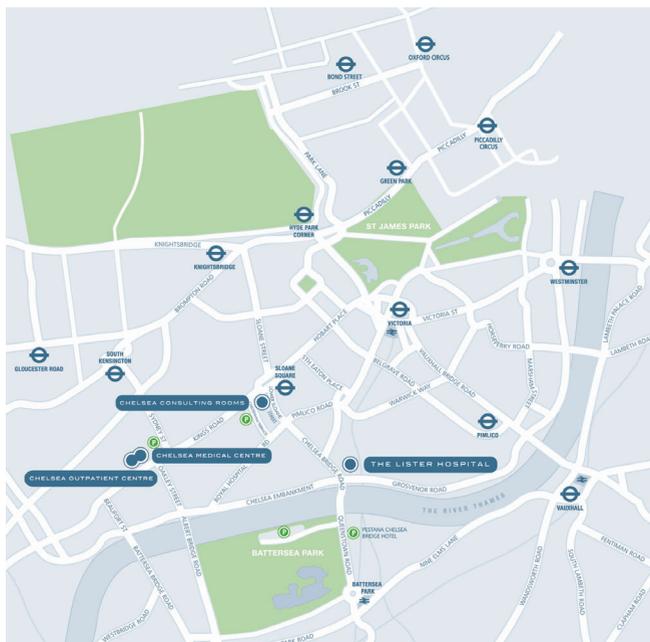
SUMMARY

- Norovirus causes vomiting and diarrhoea
- It spreads readily
- It is rarely serious but symptoms can last 1-2 days
- Hand hygiene is the key to prevention of infection

How can I obtain more information?

- Speak with your appointed nurse
- Liaise with the Senior Nursing Team
- Contact the local unit of the Public Health England (PHE)

Map



The Lister Hospital

Chelsea Bridge Road

London SW1W 8RH

T +44 (0) 20 7730 7733

F +44 (0) 20 7824 8867

www.thelisterhospital.com

Patient Information Leaflet

Norovirus

Date: 11.2016 | V2

THE LISTER HOSPITAL
chelsea

part of **HCA**Healthcare UK

What is Norovirus?

Norovirus is the most common cause of gastrointestinal infection in the UK. It is much more common than other well-known gastrointestinal infections such as salmonella. There are probably about 600,000 to 1 million cases of the disease every year. It causes disease only in humans.

There is usually a peak of infection in the winter. In the past Noroviruses have been called “winter vomiting viruses”, “small round structured viruses” and “Norwalk-like viruses.”

Symptoms

The incubation period (time taken from catching the virus until you are unwell) is usually 24 to 48 hours.

The symptoms include:

- Vomiting (often sudden and projectile)
- Nausea
- Diarrhoea.

Although this is an unpleasant disease, it is very rarely dangerous. Usually symptoms last for about two days and most people make a full and speedy recovery. In most cases no treatment is required, but it is sensible to drink plenty of clear fluid as soon as the vomiting has stopped to avoid dehydration. You may need to provide a stool sample for analysis. Those infected by the virus will not be protected against a repeat infection in the future.

How is it spread?

The source of the virus is usually the stool or vomitus of an affected individual.

Norovirus is spread extremely easily from one person to another by contact with an affected person, eating or drinking contaminated food or water, and contact with contaminated surfaces/objects.

- Spread can happen through poor hand hygiene after using the toilet
- Virus particles may alight on surfaces and be picked up on the hands of another person
- Food items can transmit the virus if exposed to an affected individual’s vomit or if handled by contaminated hands
- Only a few virus particles are needed to initiate infection in a susceptible person

Therefore it is easy to see that infection can spread very readily (in many ways similar to the common cold) particularly in areas where there are large numbers of people gathered together like schools, nursing homes, hospitals, hotels and cruise ships.

People remain infectious for approximately 48 hours after symptoms have finished. Food outbreaks have been associated with ready to eat foods (e.g. salads and shellfish harvested in contaminated water) and drinking water.

Prevention

Staff will take additional precautions when caring for you, i.e. use of gloves and aprons. Good hand washing with soap and water is the key to the prevention of Norovirus. Hands must be washed before handling food and after visiting the toilet. Anyone with diarrhoea should not prepare or handle food for others.

Alcohol hand gel can be used after hand washing but not as an alternative to soap and water, this is because alcohol will not kill the Norovirus spores.

The virus can remain viable for days on floors and surfaces so prompt cleaning up of vomit or diarrhoea is required, and cleaning staff will pay particular care to the decontamination of your room with disinfectant.

Can I still have visitors?

Yes you can have visitors, but numbers may have to be restricted. Children should be discouraged from coming to see you, as they may be particularly susceptible to the virus.

Friends or relatives who have diarrhoea or vomiting themselves should not visit. The ward staff will advise about any special precautions that are necessary. Visitors will be asked to wash and dry their hands after visiting you.

