



NoroVirus Viral Gastroenteritis

Description:

Gastroenteritis (stomach flu) with sudden onset of the following symptoms

- Vomiting, more often in children
- Watery, non-bloody diarrhea with abdominal (stomach) cramps
- Nausea
- Occasionally fever, chills, headache, muscle aches
- Dehydration may occur, especially in the young and elderly

How is it spread?

- Virus
- Spread primarily by fecal-oral route (eating or drinking contaminated food/water)
- By touching an object contaminated and putting hands or fingers in mouth
- By having direct contact with someone who is infected

What to expect:

- Lasts for 1-10 days
- No serious long-term complications for most people

Is it contagious?

- Yes
- Both stool and vomit are infectious
- Illness usually occurs between 1-2 days after exposure

How is it diagnosed and treated?

- Physician evaluation with lab confirmation of stool samples
- Treatment is aimed at symptom relief, along with fluid replacement and correction of electrolyte imbalances, if necessary

Should the sick child be isolated?

- Yes

When can the child return to day care or school?

- The child may return when they are symptom free and feel well, upon recommendation from their primary care provider

Genesee County Health Department
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Preventing the spread of gastroenteritis

- Wash hands frequently
- Wash and prepare food properly
- Clean contaminated surfaces after an illness episode with bleach-based household cleaner thoroughly
- Wash contaminated clothing or linen immediately
- Offer sick leave for those who are ill; food handlers should not be allowed to handle food until at least 3 days after recovery from illness

If I have any other questions, whom can I contact?

- Call the Genesee County Health Department, 257-3612

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, call your health care provider.

11/30/12