

# Parent Food Safety Guide for Norovirus



## What is Norovirus?

Noroviruses are a type of calicivirus responsible for as many as 23 million episodes of acute gastroenteritis (often incorrectly called 'stomach flu') in the U.S. each year. Norovirus is highly infectious, and spreads rapidly in contained environments such as cruise ships and nursing homes. The virus may also be referred to as Norwalk or Norwalk-like virus (NLV).

### MARLERCLARK

MARLER CLARK IS THE NATION'S FOREMOST LAW FIRM REPRESENTING VICTIMS OF FOOD POISONING.

This brochure is part of our on-going effort to end the need for Norovirus litigation in this country. Until then, you can contact us at [WWW.MARLERCLARK.COM](http://WWW.MARLERCLARK.COM) or by calling 866-770-2032.



## How do you get Norovirus?

Norovirus enters the body through the mouth. A person may become infected by consuming food or water contaminated with norovirus; touching contaminated surfaces or objects and then placing that hand in your mouth; or having contact with another person who is infected and showing symptoms, including breathing in airborne particles after the ill person has thrown up or has had diarrhea, or sharing foods or eating utensils with someone who is ill, including ill food handlers. Unlike many other viruses, people do not develop an immunity to norovirus and can become sick again.



## What to look for:

Usual symptoms of norovirus infections include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. Headache and low-grade fever may also accompany this infection. The illness usually develops 24 to 48 hours after exposure and lasts for 24 to 60 hours. Some have mild symptoms, others quite acute. Recovery usually occurs in two to three days without serious or long-term health effects.



## What to do:

Laboratory diagnosis is difficult, so norovirus infection is often diagnosed based on the combination of symptoms, particularly violent vomiting, cramps, and low-grade fever. No specific treatment is available, although persons who are severely dehydrated might need rehydration therapy



## Prevention:

Clean and sanitize anything that has come into contact with an ill person or their vomit or fecal matter. Be extremely careful when cleaning up after an ill person; Wash hands with soap and water and dry with a paper towel after using the toilet, before preparing or eating food, and after caring for the sick; exclude sick persons from handling food or working in food environments. Raw shellfish (oysters, clams, mussels) pose a risk of norovirus; thorough cooking will kill the virus. If you are traveling in an area that appears to have polluted water, drink only boiled drinks or carbonated bottled beverages without ice and avoid raw fruit and produce. For more information visit [www.about-norovirus.com](http://www.about-norovirus.com).