

For more information on norovirus or to report individuals with vomiting, diarrhea, or fever associated with food consumption, contact:
 Email: epidemiology.fhd@sdcounty.ca.gov
 Phone: 858-505-6814
 Website: www.sdcdeh.org



NOROVIRUS INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL

Norovirus causes a highly contagious gastrointestinal infection. It is easily spread through contact with contaminated surfaces. Any surface can become contaminated if touched by the hands of an infected individual. Surfaces in direct contact with vomit or fecal material from an infected person are of highest concern. Such areas should be treated immediately. Disinfect as a matter of urgency. See below for directions. Surfaces that are frequently touched should be cleaned and sanitized often:

- Bathroom Surfaces
- Kitchen Surfaces
- Doorknobs
- Recreation Equipment
- Light Switch Plates
- Phones
- Computer Keyboards
- Railings
- High Chairs
- Tables & Chairs
- Wheelchairs & Walkers
- Remote Controls

Effective Disinfectants

- **Fresh Chlorine Bleach:** Allow 10-20 minutes of contact time, then rinse with water
 - **200ppm** (parts per million): 1 tablespoon in 1 gallon water
Use for stainless steel, food/mouth contact items, toys
 - **1000ppm:** 1/3 cup in 1 gallon water
Use for nonporous surfaces, tile floors, counters, sinks, toilets
 - **5000ppm:** 1-2/3 cups bleach in 1 gallon water
Use for porous surfaces, wooden floors
- **Glutaraldehyde (0.5%):** Mix and apply according to the manufacturer's recommendations
- **Iodine (0.8%):** Mix and apply according to the manufacturer's recommendations

Disinfectants Not Effective Against Norovirus

- Quaternary, ethanol, and anionic compounds are not effective

Cleaning Spills of Vomit or Feces

- Use personal protective equipment (PPE = gloves, masks, gowns).
- Cordon off area immediately.
- Clean up visible debris using disposable absorbent material (paper towels or other disposable cloths) and minimize aerosols.
- Discard soiled items carefully in an impervious plastic bag.
- Liberally clean and disinfect area and objects surrounding the contamination with an appropriate effective disinfectant. Use 5000ppm solution of bleach to clean up vomit and feces.
- Take off gloves, gown, and mask, in that order, and discard before exiting contaminated clean-up area.
- Place discarded PPE in an impervious plastic bag.
- Re-glove and transport bag to a secure trash container; do not allow the bag to come into contact with clothing.
- Always wash hands after handling any biohazardous material, trash, or waste.

Specific Cleaning Methods

- **ALWAYS wear gloves and protect clothing**
- **Hard Surfaces**
 - Disinfect with bleach; then rinse with water if in food preparation area.
- **Carpet and Upholstered Furniture**
 - Visible debris should be removed with disposable absorbent materials and discarded in an impervious plastic bag. Handle carefully to minimize aerosols.
 - Carpet should be cleaned by heat inactivation using steam: 158°F for 5 minutes or 212°F for 1 minute (disinfecting with bleach may discolor carpet).
- **Linens, Clothing, and Textiles**
 - Remove visible debris from items before washing.
 - Handle contaminated items with gloves.
 - Keep contaminated items away from uncontaminated items.
 - Wash contaminated items in a pre-wash cycle followed by a regular wash cycle.
 - Use HOT water. Use detergent and bleach. Use oxygenated detergent alone when bleach cannot be used.
 - Dry contaminated items separately from uncontaminated items at a temperature of 170° F or above.
- **Surfaces Corrodible or Damageable by Bleach**
 - Use registered products effective against norovirus
EPA website: <http://www.epa.gov/oppad001/chemregindex.htm>

Proper Handling

- Manage waste safely and dispose to a secure trash container.
- Use chemicals in well-ventilated areas.
- Avoid contact between incompatible chemicals.
- Prevent chemical contact with food during cleaning.
- Handle contaminated material as little as possible and with minimal agitation to reduce aerosols.

Preventing the Spread of Illness

- Practice diligent hand washing and good personal hygiene for all food employees (see below).
- Use utensils or gloves to eliminate bare hands contact with ready to eat food. Avoid bare hand contact with ready to eat foods for at least two weeks after illnesses have stopped.
- Thoroughly and continuously disinfect the facility and food areas per guidelines highlighted above.
- Exclude and/or restrict food employees from working with food, utensils, and equipment for at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.
- Norovirus can be transmitted through aerosolized vomitus, ensure proper cleaning methods are used, including the use of masks.

Handwashing

Food employees shall thoroughly wash their hands and arms exposed to direct food contact with soap and warm water for at least 10 to 15 seconds and thoroughly rinse with clean running water followed by drying. Ensure handwashing signs are posted in the appropriate locations. Employees shall wash their hands in all of the following instances:

- Immediately before engaging in food preparations, including working with non-prepackaged food, clean equipment and utensils, and unwrapped single-use food containers and utensils
- After touching bare human body parts other than clean hands and clean, exposed portions of arms
- After using the toilet room
- After caring for or handling any animal allowed in a food facility
- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue, using tobacco, eating, or drinking
- After handling soiled equipment or utensils
- During food preparation, as often as necessary to remove soil and contamination and to prevent cross-contamination when changing tasks
- When switching between working with raw food and working with ready to eat food
- Before donning gloves for working with food
- Before dispensing or serving food or handling clean tableware and serving utensils in the food service area
- After engaging in other activities that contaminate the hands.

Employee Health Guidelines

All food employees must have knowledge regarding the relationship between personal health & hygiene and food safety.

Food Employee Notifications

- Notify the Person in Charge (PIC) if you have been diagnosed with a Norovirus infection. Be advised that an employee is also required to report the following: Salmonella, Hepatitis A, Shigella, Enterohemorrhagic or shiga toxin producing E. coli, or Entamoeba histolytica. Remember, you should not work with food or utensils if you are sick with gastrointestinal illnesses, especially diarrhea and/or abdominal cramps, fever, and vomiting.

Person in Charge Requirements

- Report to the Department of Environmental Health if a food employee is diagnosed with Norovirus by calling (619) 338-2356. Remember, it is required that the following illnesses also be reported: Salmonella, Hepatitis A, Shigella, Enterohemorrhagic or shiga toxin producing E. coli, or Entamoeba histolytica.
- Report to the Department of Environmental Health if **two or more people** are sick with acute gastrointestinal illness by calling (619) 338-2356. Acute gastrointestinal illness is diarrhea, either alone or with vomiting, fever, or abdominal cramps. It can also include vomiting with diarrhea or two other gastrointestinal symptoms such as fever or abdominal cramps.
- Exclude a food employee from the food facility if diagnosed with Salmonella, Hepatitis A, Shigella, Enterohemorrhagic or shiga toxin producing E. coli, Norovirus or Entamoeba histolytica. Only the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health or the County Health and Human Services Agency can clear an excluded employee to go back to work.
- Restrict a food employee from working with exposed food, clean equipment, clean linens, clean utensils, and unwrapped single-service articles if the food employee is suffering from symptoms of acute gastrointestinal illness or if they are experiencing persistent coughing, sneezing, or nasal discharges.
- Restrictions can be removed by the Person in Charge when the food employee states they no longer have symptoms of illness.