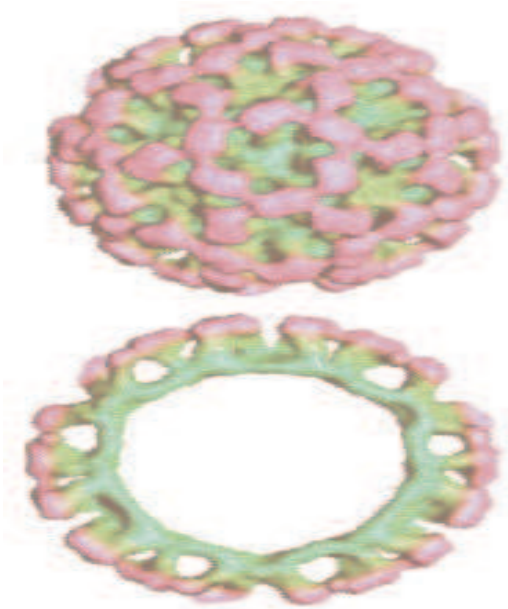


Winter Vomiting

The virus was first identified retrospectively, in 1972 from an outbreak of gastroenteritis in a school in the town of Norwalk, Ohio.



Structure of the Norovirus

Winter Vomiting

Winter Vomiting is the commonest cause of outbreaks of acute gastroenteritis in the community

Evidence suggests that between one and three percent of people can expect to become infected with Winter Vomiting each year.

If you are in hospital and develop symptoms -

- You will be placed in isolation-with visiting restricted.
- When you are 48 hours free of symptoms you will be considered non infectious.
- Pay particular attention to hand hygiene and hygiene in general.



Infection Control
Mercy University Hospital
Cork.

Winter Vomiting



Norovirus

PATIENT/VISITOR
INFORMATION LEAFLET

What is Norovirus (Winter Vomiting) Virus)

- Winter Vomiting is a very infectious /contagious bug belonging to the Norovirus group. It causes gastroenteritis.
- It is called Winter Vomiting as it occurs mainly during winter but can occur at any time of the year.
- It is community acquired and leads to serious outbreaks in the hospital setting when someone is admitted with the virus.

What are the symptoms of Winter Vomiting?

- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and stomach cramps. In addition you may have a slight raise in temperature, muscle aches and a general feeling of being unwell. It is usually short lived- 24-48 hours duration.

Is it easy to catch the virus?

- Yes! It is a very contagious virus. It is present in the faeces or vomit of those who are infected.

How does a person become infected?

- Having direct contact with someone who is infected and having the symptoms ie caring for someone who is ill or someone in your household.

If someone has the virus how long are they infectious for?

- From the moment of feeling ill to at least 48- 72 hours (usually) after the symptoms subside. Therefore, if affected it is advisable that a person should refrain from going back to work until they are 48 hours symptom free.

GOOD HAND WASHING/GOOD HYGIENIC PRACTICE IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE.



What is the treatment for this virus?

- Currently there is no antiviral treatment for the Winter Vomiting and no vaccine available for its prevention. Antibiotics are of no benefit in the case of this virus.
- The virus is usually short lived in healthy individuals and during the

period of vomiting/diarrhoea you are advised to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Dehydration is common in those who are immunocompromised, in the elderly, in very young children and those who have underlying disease. If worried seek medical help.

What can the Public do to help during hospital outbreaks?

We in the hospital rely on your help and understanding due to the potential that this virus has for spreading.

- Avoid visiting the hospital except in certain circumstances – ie. only if somebody is seriously ill. In that case it will be arranged with the ward/department.
- If you are normally a healthy person and develop symptoms of Winter Vomiting avoid going to the Accident/Emergency Department. If worried contact your GP.
- During any outbreak the hospital will issue press statements and we ask for your co-operation in adhering to any restrictions that are in place.