



# Norovirus Facts & Stats

MDHHS-Pub-2280 (11-25)



## What is norovirus?

Norovirus is a **very contagious** virus that causes vomiting and diarrhea.

- Norovirus is often called the “stomach flu,” but it is **not** related to influenza, a respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus.

Most people with norovirus illness get better within **1 to 3 days**; but they can still spread the virus for a few days after.

Norovirus is the leading cause of vomiting and diarrhea, and foodborne illness in the United States!

## What are the symptoms of a norovirus infection?

Norovirus illness usually begins **12-48 hours after exposure**.

Most common symptoms:

- Diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, stomach pain.

Other symptoms may include:

- Fever, headache, and body aches.

Experiencing vomiting/diarrhea multiple times a day can lead to **dehydration** (loss of body fluids). Dehydration symptoms include:

- Decreased urination, dry mouth/throat, feeling dizzy when standing up.



## Watch for signs of dehydration in children who have norovirus illness.

- Children who are dehydrated may cry with few or no tears and be unusually sleepy or fussy.
- Dehydration can lead to serious problems. Severe dehydration may require hospitalization for treatment with fluids given through your vein (intravenous or IV fluids).
- If you think you or someone you are caring for is severely dehydrated, call your doctor.

## How is norovirus spread?

Norovirus is **very contagious** and spreads easily from person-to-person.

- You can find norovirus in your vomit or feces (poop) even **before** you start feeling sick.
- The virus can also stay in your feces for **2 weeks** or more after you feel better.
  - You can still spread norovirus during that time.

People can become infected in several ways, including:

- **Eating food or drinking liquids** that are contaminated by infected food handlers.
- Contact with surfaces that have been contaminated with norovirus and **not washing your hands** prior to eating or touching your mouth.
- Having **direct contact** with another person with norovirus.
- Contact with small **vomit** particles that are suspended in air.
- **Drinking water** that has been contaminated with sewage.





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## How serious is norovirus?

- Most people get better within **1 to 3 days** and have **no long-term health effects** from the illness.
- Sometimes, people are unable to drink enough liquids to replace what they lose from vomiting and diarrhea, and they can become **dehydrated** and need to see a doctor.
- Young children, elderly people, and people with weakened immune systems are at **higher risk** for severe illness.

**Anyone** can get norovirus because there are many different types of the virus.

You can become ill from norovirus many times throughout your life.

## How long are people contagious?

- People infected with norovirus are contagious from the **moment they begin feeling ill to at least 2-3 days after recovery**.
- Some people may be contagious for as long as 2 weeks after recovery.
- Therefore, good hand washing is important so the virus is not transmitted.
- **Persons infected with norovirus should not prepare food while they have symptoms, and for at least 48-72 hours after symptoms resolve.**
- Infected people rarely become long-term carriers of norovirus.



### If you are sick:

Do **not** prepare or handle food, or care for others. Wait for at least **2 days (48 hours) after symptoms stop**. This is important if you work in a restaurant, school, daycare, long-term care facility, or other places where you may expose people to norovirus.

## What treatment is available for norovirus?

- Currently, there are no specific medications or vaccines for norovirus.
- Norovirus infection **cannot be treated with antibiotics**.
- By drinking fluids, such as juice or water, people can reduce their chance of becoming dehydrated while sick with the virus.





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## Do infected people need to be excluded from child settings or health care facilities?

Children and staff who are experiencing symptoms of norovirus should stay home from school or daycare until **48 hours after symptoms are resolved**.

Ill persons should be excluded from swimming for at least 48 hours after their symptoms end.

Sick workers in schools, daycares, healthcare facilities, and restaurants should stay home when sick and for **at least 48 hours after symptoms stop**.

- Staff involved in food preparation should be **restricted from preparing food** for 48-72 hours after symptoms have resolved.
  - The staff may perform other duties not associated with food preparation in the 48-72 hours after their symptoms stop.
- Even when returning to work, it is especially important that food workers continue to take precautions, such as frequent handwashing.

People working in **daycare centers, nursing homes, or healthcare facilities** should pay special attention to children or residents who have symptoms of norovirus. Norovirus can spread quickly in these settings!

## How do I prevent norovirus?

Norovirus is very contagious, but you can take steps to protect yourself and others, including:

- **Washing your hands** well and often.
  - Alcohol based hand sanitizers are NOT effective against norovirus.
- **Cooking** shellfish thoroughly and **washing** fruits and vegetables.
- **Cleaning and disinfecting** contaminated surfaces.
  - Refer to the [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services \(MDHHS\) Guidelines for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection of Noroviruses](#) for instructions.
- Washing laundry in hot water.
- **Staying home when sick** until 2 days (48 hours) after symptoms stop.





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Norovirus is the **leading cause** of vomiting and diarrhea from acute gastroenteritis among people of all ages in the United States.

Norovirus causes **58% of foodborne illnesses** acquired in the United States.

- Most outbreaks occur when infected people spread the virus to others through direct contact (such as caring for them, sharing/preparing food, or eating with the same utensils).

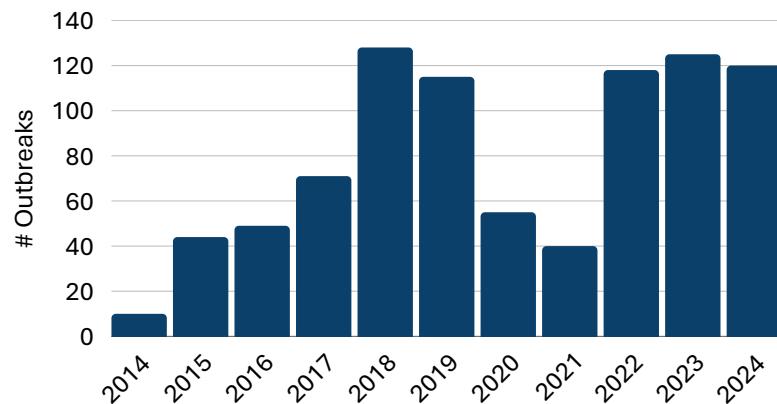
Each year, there are about **2,500 reported norovirus outbreaks** in the United States.

- Norovirus outbreaks occur throughout the year, but are most common from November to April.
- More outbreaks were reported nationally during the 2024-2025 seasonal year than during the same time period in previous seasons.
- In years when there is a new strain of the virus, there can be 50% more norovirus illness.

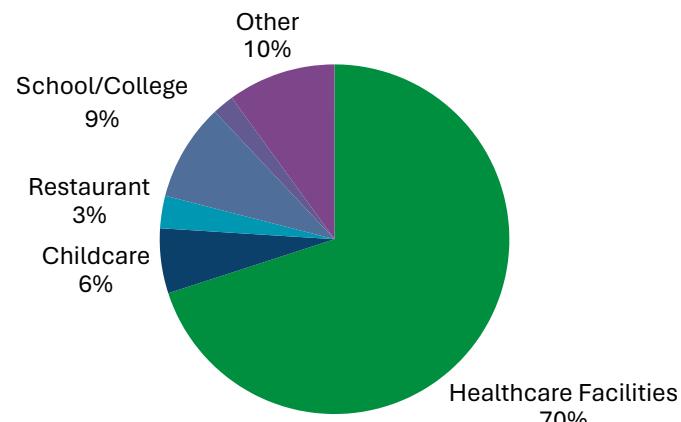
Michigan reports aggregate data on norovirus outbreaks to CDC's [\*\*NoroSTAT\*\* network](#), including:

- Date/location of outbreak
- Number of ill people & their symptoms
- Specific pathogen identified

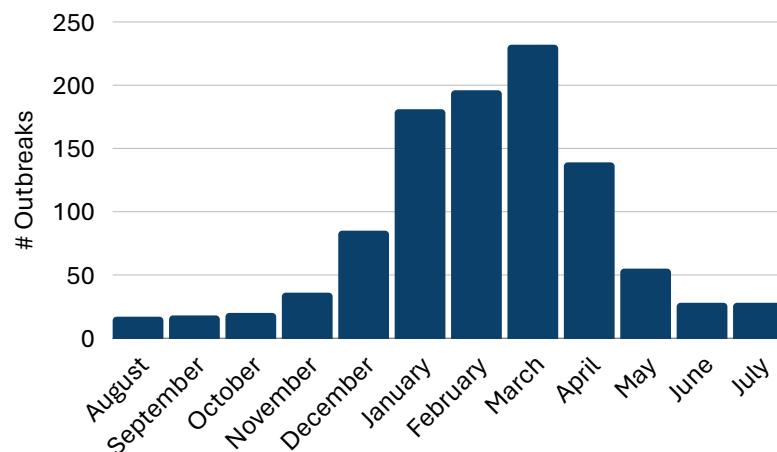
## Norovirus Outbreaks by Year, Michigan, 2014 - 2024



## Norovirus Outbreaks by Setting, Michigan, 2014 - 2024



## Norovirus Outbreaks by Month, Michigan, 2014 - 2024



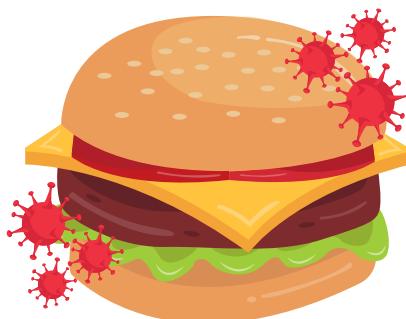


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## How does norovirus spread?



Eating food contaminated by infected food handlers.



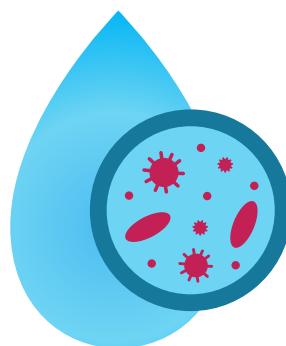
Direct contact with a person infected by norovirus.



Not washing hands after touching contaminated surfaces.



Contact with small particles of vomit in the air.



Contaminated drinking water.



*Recent outbreaks have occurred from eating undercooked oysters harvested from contaminated waters. Thorough cooking will inactivate the virus and make the oysters safe to eat.*



# Norovirus Resources

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## General Norovirus

[CDC About Norovirus](#)

[CDC How to Prevent Norovirus](#)

[CDC About Handwashing](#)

[CDC Clean Up After Someone with Norovirus](#)

[Vomits or has Diarrhea \(Video\)](#)

[MDHHS Guidelines for Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection of Norovirus](#)

[EPA List of Disinfectants Effective Against Norovirus](#)

## Healthcare Facilities

[MDHHS Long Term Care Norovirus Checklist](#)

[CDC Norovirus Prevention and Control Guidelines for Healthcare Settings](#)

[CDC Responding to Norovirus Outbreaks](#)

[CDC Project Firstline How to Read a Disinfectant Label](#)

[CDC Transmission-Based Precautions](#)

## Outdoors

[Preventing Norovirus When Camping, Hiking, or Outdoors](#)

- Case Study - [2022 Outbreak Among Rafters and Backpackers in the Backcountry of Grand Canyon National Park](#)

## Schools & Childcare

US Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service, NEA Healthy Futures

- [Stomach Bug Book: What School Employees Need to Know](#)

Washington Integrated Food Safety Center of Excellence

- [Norovirus Toolkit for School or Childcare Center Outbreaks](#)

[CDC Preventing Norovirus at Youth Camps](#)

## Food Safety

[CDC Norovirus Fact Sheet for Food Workers](#)

[CDC Food Safety](#)

### Previous Outbreaks:

- Multistate outbreak linked to raw oysters from Texas, 2022

## Reporting & Statistics

[Norovirus Outbreaks](#)

- Current alerts and advisories

[CDC Norovirus Facts and Stats](#)

[CDC NoroSTAT Network Surveillance Data](#)

[CDC Bacteria, Enterics, Ameba, and Mycotics \(BEAM\) Dashboard](#)

[CDC Estimates: Burden of Foodborne Illness in the United States](#)

[MDHHS Norovirus Testing Requirements](#)