

# Battling the Stomach Bug

*Food Safety is Your Friend*

## **FOOD SAFE SCHOOLS ACTION GUIDE**

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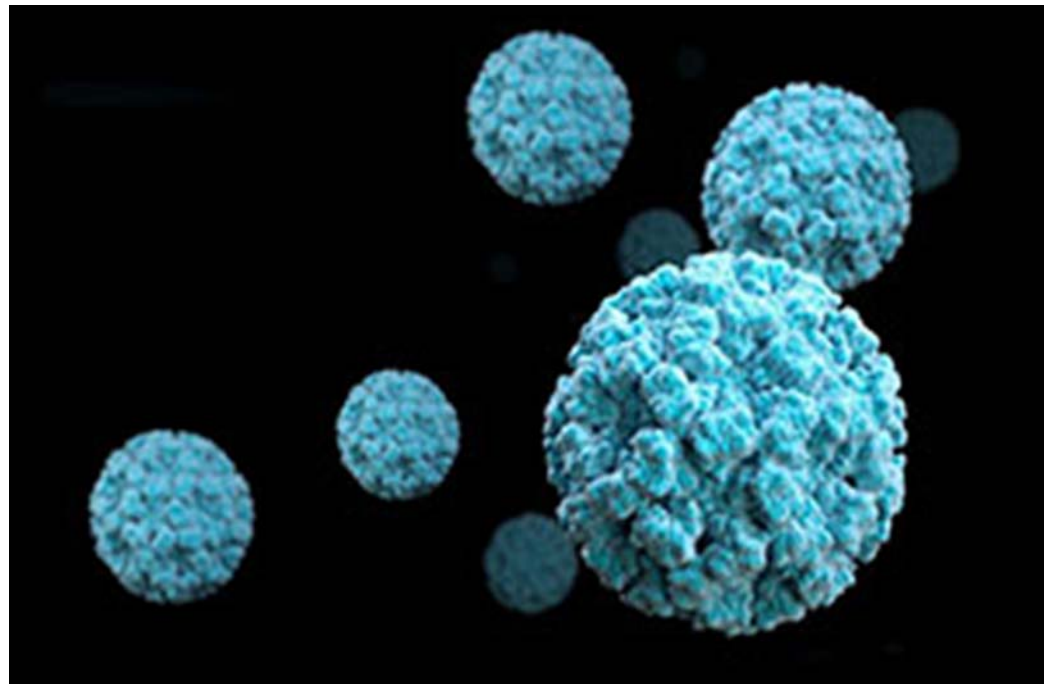
*Food & Nutrition Service, Office  
of Food Safety*



United States Department of Agriculture

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## OBJECTIVES

- Understand the severe impact that an outbreak of norovirus can have in a school setting.
- Describe practices to prevent and control foodborne norovirus outbreaks.
- Identify norovirus prevention and control resources for school nutrition professionals.



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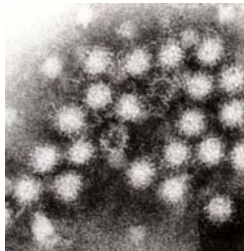
- Less than 4% of all foodborne outbreaks reported to the CDC are in school settings.
- When foodborne outbreaks do occur in schools illnesses are most often associated with norovirus.

Venuto, M., Garcia K., Halbrook, B. (2015) Analyses of the Contributing Factors Associated With Foodborne Outbreaks in School Settings (2000-2010). *Journal of Environmental Health*, 77(7), 16-20.



## History

- The Norovirus was originally named the Norwalk agent after Norwalk, Ohio, USA
- Outbreak of acute gastroenteritis occurred among children at Bronson Elementary School in November, 1968
- The name was shortened to Norovirus after being identified in a number of outbreaks on cruise ships



*Norwalk virus under a microscope*



## Norovirus Symptoms

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal Cramps
- Starts 1 to 2 days after exposure
- Duration is usually 1 to 3 days





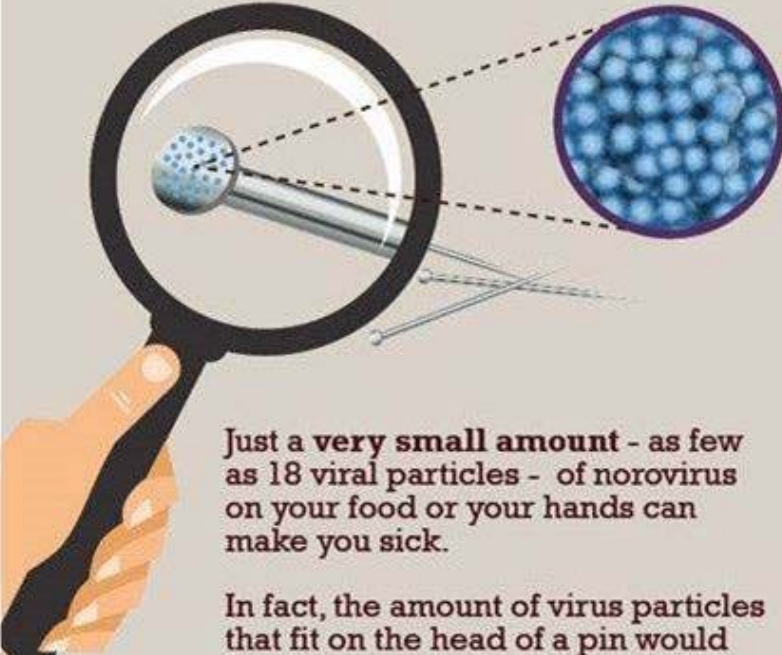
# TRANSMISSION



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How contagious is norovirus?



Just a **very small amount** - as few as 18 viral particles - of norovirus on your food or your hands can make you sick.

In fact, the amount of virus particles that fit on the head of a pin would be enough to infect **more than 1,000 people!**

Source: Journal of Medical Virology, August, 2008



## What makes norovirus different?

- Highly contagious
- Easily spread
- Hard to kill
- Small amount





# PREVENTION



## 3 Key Safe Food Practices

1. Wash hands
2. Avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods
3. Stay home when sick



WASH  
YOUR  
HANDS!



*About Hand Sanitizer: Use if soap and water are not available*

## **Proper Hand Washing is Critical for Preventing Transmission and Infection**

- Especially after each toilet visit
- When changing diapers especially in child care settings.
- Before eating or preparing food



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Avoid bare hand contact  
with ready-to-eat foods

- Use single use disposable gloves
- Use utensils



## Stay Home When Sick

Employees Should Report the Following Symptoms  
To Their Manager

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Jaundice
- Sore throat with fever
- Infected cuts and wounds on hands, wrists, or exposed portions of the arms









# BE PREPARED

*How to Clean and Prevent the Spread of Norovirus*

## Be Prepared

Assemble a body fluid clean up kit

- Personal Protective Equipment
- Cleaning Supplies
- Bleach or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered disinfectant effective against norovirus







## Clean Up Techniques for A Vomiting Incident

- All individuals within a 25 foot radius should be removed from area and should immediately wash hands
- Potentially contaminated clothing should be removed, machine washed in hot water on longest cycle and dried in hottest setting.



## Protect Yourself

- Part of an appropriate response includes protecting yourself from germs
  - Wear personal protective equipment
  - To protect your clothes, shoes, and face from splashing and airborne particles and your hands from direct contact with body waste





## Case Study:

### Norovirus Outbreak at a North Dakota High School.

May 2005

- About 52 students (grades 7-12) & 8 faculty
- The median incubation period of 32.5 hours involving symptoms of nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and abdominal cramps lasting about 24 hours
- Health department suspected Norovirus. Lab test confirmed
- Lettuce most likely source of infection

[North Dakota Department of Health Epidemiology Report 2005 Year in Review](https://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Newsletters/EpiArchives/NovDec05.pdf)

<https://www.ndhealth.gov/disease/Newsletters/EpiArchives/NovDec05.pdf>



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### Resources



[www.fns.usda.gov/food-safety/food-safety-resources](http://www.fns.usda.gov/food-safety/food-safety-resources)





Questions?



United States Department of Agriculture

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**Thank You!**