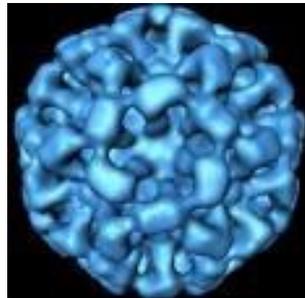


Infection Prevention and Control

Viral Gastroenteritis



Patient Information Leaflet

What is Viral Gastroenteritis?

Viral gastroenteritis is a very infectious illness which can be caused by any one of several different viruses e.g. Norovirus. The main symptoms are vomiting and diarrhoea but can include feeling sick, headache, tummy ache, muscle aches and fever. Symptoms can last between 24 to 72 hours.

How is Viral Gastroenteritis spread?

Viral gastroenteritis can spread quickly in hospitals and other health care settings. Viral gastroenteritis can be spread from person to person by poor hand washing after visiting the toilet, before preparing or eating food and by coming into close contact with somebody who already has the virus.

What can be done to stop Viral Gastroenteritis spreading?

It is not possible to completely prevent the spread of the virus. However, hand washing with soap and water after using the toilet and before preparing or eating food is an important way to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting stay at home and drink plenty of fluids.

Can viral gastroenteritis be treated?

There are no treatments available apart from letting the virus run its course. Diarrhoea and vomiting can cause dehydration, so it is important that you drink plenty of fluids.

What will happen to me if I am in hospital?

You may be moved into a single room or nursed in a bay with other patients who have the virus or may have been exposed to the virus. The doors to your room or bay will be closed and staff will wear gloves and aprons when caring for you. It is also important that you use the toilet or commode that has been allocated to you. This is to prevent the infection spreading to other patients on the ward. You will still receive the care you need; however non urgent tests may be delayed until your symptoms have stopped.

Visitors?

The very young and the elderly should be asked not to visit if you have diarrhoea and/or vomiting caused by the virus. Visiting may also be restricted if there is an outbreak of the virus on the ward.

Visitors who have diarrhoea and/or vomiting should **not visit** until 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped.

If your visitor is visiting other people in the hospital, they should visit you last. Your visitors should stay with you and should not eat or drink during their visit. Visitors must wash their hands with soap and water when entering and on leaving the ward.

Laundry

If relatives or carers are taking your clothing home to wash, it must be washed separately from other items and at the highest temperature that the material will allow. They should wash their hands with soap and water after placing items in washing machine.

Am I able to go home with Viral Gastroenteritis?

If your doctor thinks you are well enough, you can go home. If you are being discharged to a nursing or rest home, you may need to be 48 hours free of symptoms before you are discharged.

Should you have any further questions or require further advice please speak to your doctor, nurse or Infection Prevention staff.

Infection Prevention Team 01535 294848

Write any questions/queries below

The Public Health England website and will give further guidance and information:
<https://www.gov.uk/health-protection/infectious-diseases>

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on: 01535 294019 for advice.

Please raise any issue you may have about your care and treatment with a member of staff. Raising your concerns will not adversely affect the care you will receive.

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