

NOROVIRUS: FACTS AND PREVENTION

Norovirus is the leading cause of foodborne illness from contaminated hands and food.

Food can become contaminated with norovirus when:

- There is bare hand contact with ready-to-eat food
- Working when ill — with symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, fever
- Food is contaminated where it grows or is harvested

Food handlers with norovirus illness can spread the virus to others. Spreading occurs when:

- Infected people have stool or vomit on their hands and then touch the food with bare hands. (The virus can also spread by people who do not appear ill)
- Hands are not washed thoroughly and other surfaces are touched i.e. menus, tabletops, cutting boards, utensils and door handles
- Food is contaminated at their source, i.e. oysters harvested from contaminated water OR vegetables & fruits become contaminated in the field
- Tiny drops of vomit from an infected person sprays through the air and drops on the food
- Food is shared with co-workers (drinking soda from the same cup or sharing a utensil)



5 tips to prevent norovirus from spreading:

1. Practice proper hand hygiene — Wash carefully a minimum of 15–20 seconds (you must wash hands after using the restroom, in between glove changes, after leaving and returning to your work station and any other time as applicable).
2. Wash fruits and vegetables and cook seafood thoroughly.
3. When you are sick, do not prepare food for others.
4. Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces with an approved sanitizer.
5. Wash laundry thoroughly that may be contaminated with vomit or feces.