

CDC Vital Signs

Preventing Norovirus Outbreaks

About 20 million people in the United States get sick from norovirus each year, most from close contact with infected people or by eating contaminated food. Norovirus is very contagious, and outbreaks can occur anywhere people gather or food is served. Symptoms usually include vomiting and diarrhea. Some people infected with norovirus may need to be hospitalized and can even die.

To help prevent norovirus outbreaks, food service workers should practice proper hand washing techniques and avoid touching ready-to-eat foods, such as raw fruits and vegetables, with their bare hands before serving them. It's very important that food service workers stay home when they are sick.

You can help prevent norovirus outbreaks by washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and by not preparing food for others when you are sick. You should report suspected illness from food to your local health department.

To learn more, visit [cdc.gov/vitalsigns](https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns).