

Will it stop me going home?

If you have not had symptoms and you are going to your own home, you may do so but you may develop symptoms.

If you are due to be discharged to another healthcare facility, your discharge may be delayed.

If you require urgent medical treatment, this may still go ahead.

If you have had symptoms, have recovered and are going to your own home, you may do so.

If you have been symptomatic, have recovered and need to go to another healthcare facility, your transfer will not take place until the area you are in has been re-opened.

What can I do to help?

The best thing that you can do is to comply with what the staff ask of you, and to wash your hands with soap and running water, especially before eating and after going to the toilet.

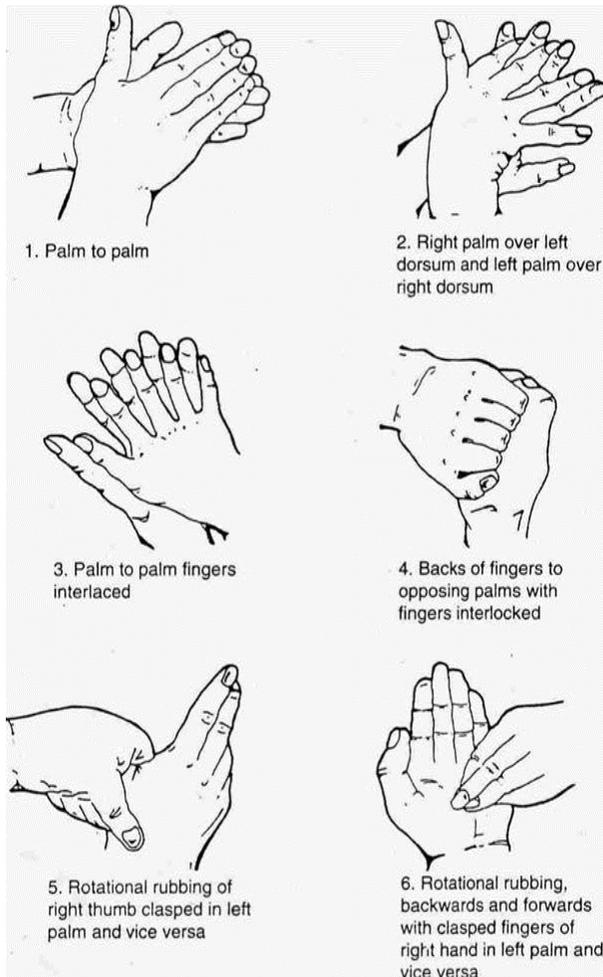
See the back of the leaflet for the correct hand hygiene technique.

Viral Gastroenteritis (Including Norovirus) information leaflet

Infection prevention team

The Trust's infection prevention team provide a comprehensive service across Wye Valley NHS Trust acute and community healthcare services.

Please contact the team on 01432 355444 extension 5133 if you would like more information.



Would you recommend our service to your Friends and Family?

Our staff members are required to ask you if you would recommend our service to family and friends. Your feedback will help us to improve the care and treatment we provide.

Wye Valley NHS Trust
www.wyevalley.nhs.uk
Telephone 01432 355444

What is viral gastroenteritis?

Viral gastroenteritis is when the gut lining becomes irritated by a virus, and can have many causes. One of the most common is Norovirus. It results in sudden onset of profuse diarrhoea with or without vomiting.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms range from mild to quite debilitating such as:

- Temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Feeling sick
- Abdominal pain
- Muscle ache
- Head ache

One or a combination of these symptoms may be present. The symptoms can last for up to three days.

How do you get it?

Viral gastroenteritis is in general circulation in the population and can affect schools, universities, cruise ships, prisons as well as healthcare premises. In order to catch it, you need to have touched a contaminated surface, eaten without washing your hands, or eaten contaminated food.

How do you stop the spread?

It is very difficult to contain the virus as you may be shedding the virus before becoming symptomatic. In healthcare settings, symptomatic patients are kept in the same area with the same staff caring for them. This as well as good hand washing and environmental cleaning, help to prevent further symptomatic cases.

Can I have visitors if I am symptomatic?

When areas are affected by viral gastroenteritis visiting is discouraged as the visitors may become symptomatic.

Any visitors that have been exposed to gastroenteritis or are symptomatic should not visit or attend a healthcare facility until they have been 48 hours symptom free.

If visitors are frail or unwell for other reasons, it is better that they do not visit till the area is no longer affected. If you do have visitors, they should not visit any other patients in that or any other healthcare facility.

Visiting should only be allowed on compassionate grounds or on discussion with the infection prevention team.

How serious is it?

Most people get over the symptoms quite quickly. If frail or very poorly people get this infection it can make them very ill indeed due to the physical strain it places them under.

Can it be treated?

There is currently no treatment for the illness other than relieving any symptoms and keeping up a good fluid intake.

What if I have any soiled laundry?

If you are symptomatic with profuse diarrhoea it may be preferable to wear hospital provided nightwear so that they can be sent to the commercial laundry. If personal items become contaminated, the handler should load the washing machine with minimal handling, and thoroughly wash their hands after. Items should be washed at the highest temperature that the material can stand.

Will I get it again?

Like most seasonal infection, they do change in character. There is no guarantee that you will not pick up another viral gastroenteritis infection.