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Hygiene tips in case of noroviruses

Most important: hand disinfection

As soon as you notice typical symptoms of norovirus infections (diarrhoea; sudden, explosive vomiting) in yourself or a member of your household, you should act immediately. Noroviruses spread rapidly, particularly via hand contact. Targeted hand hygiene therefore can prevent transmission to healthy people.

Compared to handwashing, disinfection offers several advantages. In addition to better skin compatibility, disinfection is considerably more effective, especially against viruses hard to kill such as the norovirus. Moreover, bed-ridden people can carry out hygiene measures on their own, independently of washbasins. Hand disinfectants, which in this case need to have virucidal activity, are available at pharmacies.

Disinfect your hands

- before preparing food
- after using the toilet
- hands of infected people should be disinfected before contact with healthy household members
- household members should disinfect their hands after contact with infected persons

Disinfect surfaces as well

To prevent transmission of noroviruses, you should also disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home. This includes:

- toilet seats
- bedside tables
- door handles
- light switches
- remote controls
- handrails
- handsets

To inactivate noroviruses, best use a disinfectant with “virucidal” activity (pharmacy).



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What else you can do

The following measures additionally reduce the risk of virus transmission to your loved ones:

- Acutely ill people should remain in bed and limit the contact with healthy household members for 12 to 48 hours until the symptoms subside
- Consult your family doctor/a pharmacist who will help maintain the water and electrolyte balance
- Healthy household members should avoid contact with vomit. When cleaning contaminated surfaces, best use single-use gloves and probably a face mask. Disinfect hands after removal of gloves
- Wash laundry contaminated with vomit or stool at 95 °C
- Always cook food through completely

Additional information

Robert Koch-Institut 2008: Noroviren. RKI-Ratgeber für Ärzte. (in German) - <http://edoc.rki.de/series/rki-ratgeber-fuer-arzte/2008/PDF/noroviren.pdf>

Robert Koch-Institut 2011: Infektionsepidemiologisches Jahrbuch meldepflichtiger Krankheiten für 2011: 147-152. (in German) - <http://edoc.rki.de/series/infektionsepidemiologische-jahrbuecher/2011/PDF/2011.pdf>