

# INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL

# UPDATE



Taking action to prevent infection

RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS

DECEMBER 2025

Respiratory infections are higher than usual for this time of year, and we are continuing to see more cases and outbreaks across our local health and care services, as well as educational settings.

Due to an increase in respiratory infections across both the hospital and community, the IPC Service would like to remind colleagues of the important steps to follow to protect our patients, community and colleagues from infection.

Remember it's not too late to [get your Flu Vaccination](#) to help to protect yourself and others!

## Caring for a person with confirmed or suspected respiratory infection

If you are caring for a person with a confirmed or suspected respiratory infection you must follow Droplet Precautions and wear the following Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

- Disposable apron
- Fluid resistant surgical mask (FRSM)
- Eye protection if there is a risk of splashes to the face from respiratory secretions
- Gloves

You must ensure you follow the correct guidance for mask wearing - the FRSM must cover your nose and mouth. If it slips DO NOT touch the front of the mask. When removing your mask, use the ties or ear loops, and dispose of the mask in the bin, decontaminate your hands and apply a new mask as required.

## Staff with respiratory symptoms

If you have respiratory symptoms but **do not** have a high temperature and feel well enough to work, you should wear a FRSM when in close contact with colleagues or people you care for. If you feel unwell, please don't come to work. Please discuss with your Line Manager in first instance.



## DIARRHOEA & VOMITING (NOROVIRUS)

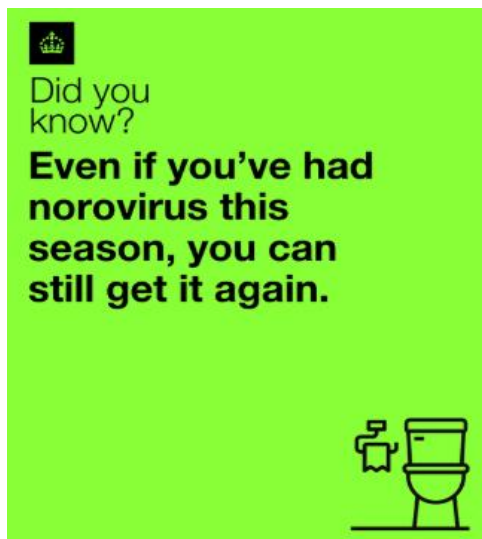
There has been an increase locally in norovirus cases and outbreaks. Norovirus spreads easily and quickly and is the most common cause of infectious gastroenteritis. You can catch it through close contact with someone with norovirus, by touching contaminated surfaces or objects and/or eating contaminated food.

### Symptoms can include:

- diarrhoea and/or vomiting
- slight fever
- stomach cramps
- headaches

It is typically self-limiting but can lead to severe illness in vulnerable groups, such as older adults and those who are immunocompromised. The risk of complications like dehydration is especially high among older people.

## Reduce the risk of Norovirus



- **Alcohol hand gels do not kill Norovirus** wash your hands with soap and water before eating and preparing food, after going to the toilet and after contact with someone who is ill with symptoms and after removing your PPE. Encourage and support people you care for to wash their hands, at key times
- **Stay away** from work and other people until you have not had symptoms (vomiting or diarrhoea) **for 48 hours**. You can still be infectious for up to two days after your symptoms have stopped. Encourage visitors not to visit if unwell.
- **Keep Hydrated** It is important that people with norovirus drink plenty of fluids (if appropriate) to avoid dehydration.

**Remember:** always following **standard infection prevention and control precautions** (SICPs) including hand and respiratory hygiene, cleaning of equipment and surfaces and keeping areas well ventilated. This will prevent the spread of all infections.

For more information about SICPs, Transmission Based Precautions and PPE please refer to the *National Infection Prevention and Control Manual for England: NHS England Chapter 2: Transmission based precautions (TBPs) and Appendix 5b*, or visit the [IPC digital hub](#).

For more information, visit our IPC Digital Hub  
<https://www.wchc.nhs.uk/services/infection-prevention-and-control/>

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