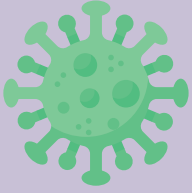


Prevention of Norovirus

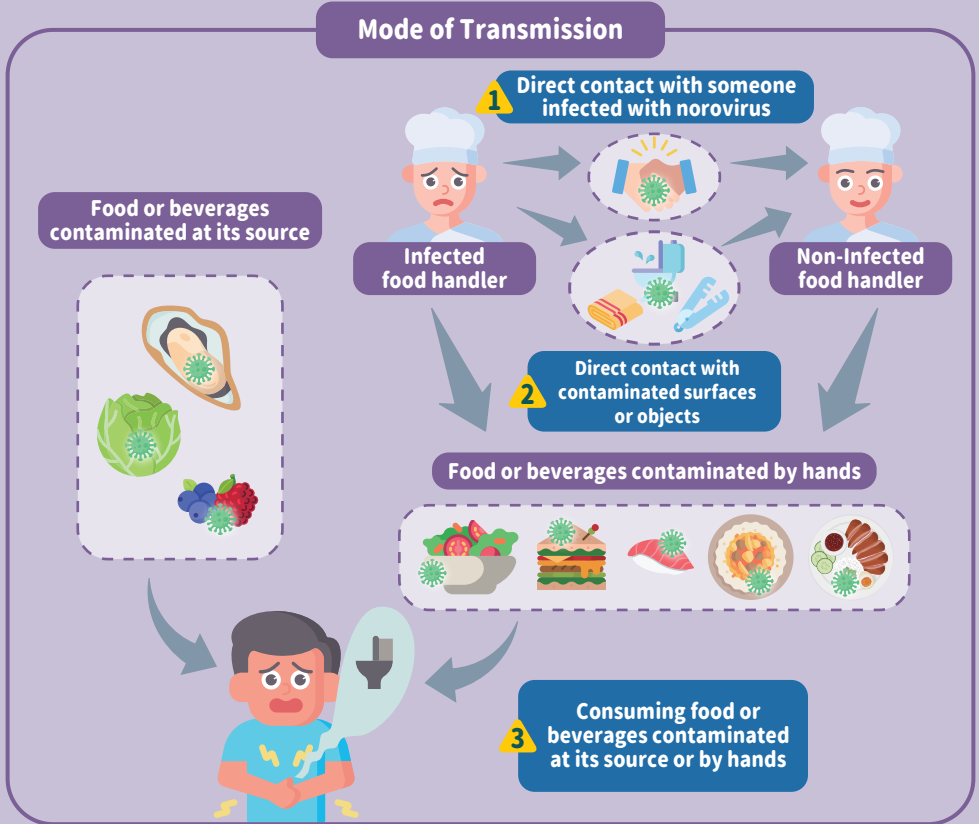
Advice for Food Handlers



What is Norovirus?



Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that causes gastroenteritis and can rapidly spread through contaminated food, water, or direct contact with an infected person. The virus's ability to persist on surfaces for long periods, combined with its low infectious dose, significantly contributes to its rapid and widespread transmission, resulting in food poisoning outbreaks.



Foods Commonly Implicated in Norovirus Food Poisoning



Shellfish
e.g Oyster



Raw vegetable

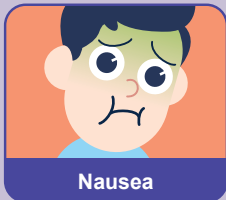
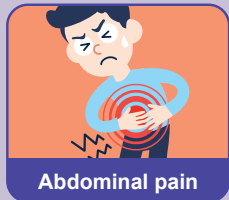


Frozen produce
e.g Berries



Ready-to-eat foods,
especially those requiring
manual handling

Common Symptoms of Norovirus Infection



A person usually develops symptoms **12 to 48 hours** after exposure to Norovirus. While the symptoms is usually self-limiting, with most people recovering within **1 to 3 days**. Food handlers should refrain from handling food when sick to prevent spreading.

Advices for Food Handlers to Prevent Norovirus from Spreading

Food Hygiene

- ✓ Cook all food thoroughly, particularly shellfish, reaching a core food temperature of at least **75°C** before serving.
- ✓ Adopt safe food-handling practices, such as washing fruits and vegetables thoroughly under clean running water.
- ✓ All foods, especially shellfish, should be purchased from reliable and reputable suppliers.



Environmental Hygiene

- ✓ Surfaces should always be cleaned before disinfection to ensure effective disinfection.
- ✓ When dealing with vomitus or faeces, wear gloves and use **1:49** diluted household bleach (by adding one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite to 49 parts of water) to thoroughly clean and disinfect contaminated areas, surfaces or objects, and leave for 15-30 minutes to allow time for the bleach to inactivate the viruses; then rinse with water and wipe the area dry. Wash hands thoroughly afterwards.

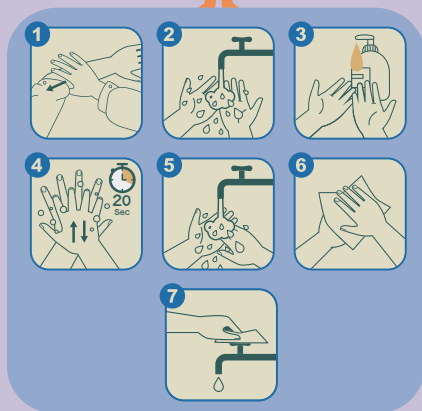


Personal Hygiene

- ✓ Food handlers who exhibit symptoms of infection, such as vomiting or diarrhoea, should report to their supervisor immediately, refrain from work, and avoid handling food until they have been symptom-free for **at least two days**.
- ✓ Practise proper hand washing steps with soap and water. Alcohol-based hand sanitisers are **not** a substitute for washing hands with soap and water, as they are ineffective against norovirus.
- ✓ Food handlers should refrain from handling food, particularly ready-to-eat items, with bare hands. Instead, use gloves or utensils. Remember to wash hands thoroughly both before and after using gloves, and replace gloves if they become torn or soiled.



To properly wash your hands



- 1 Pull sleeves up to the elbows.
- 2 Wet hands under running water.
- 3 Apply liquid soap.
- 4 Rub hands thoroughly for 20 seconds, including the forearms, wrists, palms, back of hands, fingers and under the fingernails.
- 5 Rinse thoroughly.
- 6 Dry with a paper towel and avoid sharing a hand towel.
- 7 Use a paper towel to turn off the tap if not automatic or foot operated.

Food businesses should regularly conduct training sessions for their staff, particularly new employees, to enhance their understanding of Good Hygiene Practices (GHP). For comprehensive guidance, refer to the Centre for Food Safety publication, *An Illustrated Guide To Good Hygiene Practices For Food Handlers*. Scan the QR code for more details.

