



Viral gastroenteritis

Description

Viral gastroenteritis is an inflammation of the lining of the stomach and intestine. For adults, it is caused mainly by *Norovirus*, a family of viruses that have the distinction of being very contagious; for children, *Rotavirus* is the most common.

Symptoms

The following symptoms appear suddenly and **persist for 2 to 3 days**:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain or cramps
- Headache
- Fever

The symptomatic person can transmit the virus at the onset of symptoms. It remains contagious until 48 hours after the end of these.

Transmission Mode

- Direct contact: with stool or vomiting from a person afflicted by viral gastroenteritis
- Indirect contact:
 - With virus-contaminated surfaces or objects such as door handles, faucets and toilet seat
 - Consumption of food or fluids contaminated by the virus

Treatment

There is no treatment, but it is important to relieve the symptoms.

Dehydration is the most common complication especially in young children, the elderly and people with weakened immune system. Special monitoring may be necessary depending on the state of health of each person.





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Infection prevention and control measures

Wash your hands

The easiest and most effective way to reduce the spread of the virus is to wash your hands:

- After going to the bathroom
- Before and after caring for a symptomatic person
- After cleaning the soiled environment with stool or vomiting
- Before preparing a meal or eating

Additional precautions are in place in care and service settings for people with symptoms of gastroenteritis.

To ensure the safety of your loved one, avoid visits to care and service settings if you have symptoms of gastroenteritis, at least 48 hours after the end of these symptoms.

Clean and disinfect your environment

The gastroenteritis' viruses can survive a few days in the environment. Its cleaning and disinfection are important.

- Clean immediately with soapy water the surfaces most infected by hands as doorknob or in contact with stool or vomit such as faucets, toilet bowl, toilet seat and changing table.
- Disinfect the same surfaces with a mixture of 5% bleach and cold water (one part of bleach for nine parts of cold water), prepared for less than 24 hours. Leave the solution in contact with the surfaces for 10 minutes
- Clothes, sheets or other soiled fabrics should be cleaned in the washer with hot water and detergent

Notice

These informations don't supplant the opinion of a health professional. If you have any question regarding your health condition, consult a healthcare professional or call Info-Santé at 811.