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2018

2017

News

Floods 2015

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Video library

Useful links

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Cumbrian's urged to stop the spread of winter vomiting bug

[Homepage](#) » [News](#) » Cumbrian's urged to stop the spread of winter vomiting bug

Cumbrian's urged to stop the spread of winter vomiting bug

Posted on Thursday 5th December 2013

Leading health professionals in Cumbria are advising people who may suffer from the winter vomiting bug Norovirus to stay at home for 48 hours after their symptoms have stopped to prevent the spread of the virus.

NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), the main commissioners of health services in the county, are launching a poster campaign to all GP surgeries and community pharmacies this week giving people the information on how they can help stop the spread of Norovirus.



Stop the spread of Norovirus

Norovirus is the most common cause of sickness and diarrhoea in the UK, affecting between 600,000 and 1 million people each year. Norovirus symptoms include: abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhoea. This type of illness does not last long and people usually recover between 12 and 60 hours without treatment other than rest and lots of fluids.

People visiting hospitals and other care facilities should ensure they wash their hands with soap and water before entering the hospital and again when they leave.

Anyone with symptoms of diarrhoea and sickness should not visit a hospital or care facility until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours.

Paula Smith, Professional Lead for Infection Prevention said: "Norovirus can be highly infectious so if anyone suspects they might have it they should not visit hospitals or any other care facilities for danger of infecting others.

"Everyone is at risk of Norovirus, however vulnerable people, such as the elderly, young and people with underlying illness can become very ill because diarrhoea and vomiting can cause dehydration. Anyone with concerns should telephone their local GP surgery or pharmacy for advice.

"Humans are the only known reservoir of Norovirus, and its spread may occur as a result of infected food handlers contaminating food during preparation, however person-to-person spread is the most common means of transmission, often as a result of environmental contamination by vomit or faeces. Airborne transmission can occur from suspended viral particles, particularly following vomiting.

"The infectious period lasts until 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, so to prevent the spread of this highly infectious disease you should wash your hands with soap and water and if you do become infected stay at home until you are symptom free for 48 hours.

Information on how to stay well this winter and to download copies of the posters are available from NHS Cumbria CCG's winter health advice website www.choosewellcumbria.co.uk.

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