



Viral Gastroenteritis

What is Viral Gastroenteritis?

Viral gastroenteritis is an infection caused by a virus that leads to vomiting and/or diarrhea. It is often called the “stomach flu.” Several viruses can cause viral gastroenteritis including: rotaviruses, enteric adenoviruses, and Noroviruses.

How is Viral Gastroenteritis spread?

The viruses are spread through close contact with infected persons (for example, by sharing food, water, or eating utensils) and by touching surfaces contaminated by vomit or feces of ill persons. People may also become infected by eating or drinking foods or beverages contaminated with a virus.

How is Viral Gastroenteritis treated?

- Treatment is to prevent severe loss of body fluids (dehydration).
- For children, an oral rehydration fluid such as Pedialyte, Ceralyte, or Oralyte can be used.
- Adults should drink clear liquids and avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages.
- May need special medical attention if dehydration occurs.

How can Viral Gastroenteritis be prevented?

- Frequent hand washing and hand hygiene.
- Proper food storage and preparation.
- Don't make food for others if you are ill.
- Clean contaminated surfaces with a 1:10 bleach solution.
- Promptly wash soiled clothing.

Symptoms of Viral Gastroenteritis:

- Watery Diarrhea
- Nausea and Vomiting
- Headache
- Fever
- Muscle Aches
- Tiredness
- Abdominal Cramps

Symptoms usually start 1-2 days after exposure and may last 1-10 days depending on which virus caused the illness.

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