



January 2026

Dear Parents,

As winter approaches, circulation of both gastrointestinal and respiratory viruses. Typically increase. Gastrointestinal virus, such as norovirus, and respiratory virus, such as COVID-19, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) can spread quickly in school settings. At this time, we have not observed an increase amongst among our students. However, we would like to share information about norovirus for your awareness and prevention.

About Norovirus:

Norovirus is a common stomach virus that can spread very easily, particularly in schools and other group settings. It can cause symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea. Most people recover within one to two days.

How Norovirus Spreads

People can become infected with norovirus by:

- Having close contact with someone who is sick, including caring for a child or sharing food or eating utensils (forks, knives, spoons, or chopsticks).
- Touching surfaces contaminated with norovirus and then touching their mouth.
- Eating food or drinking liquids contaminated with norovirus.

How to Help Prevent the Spread of Norovirus

- Wash hands frequently with warm water and soap, especially after using the bathroom, after changing diapers, and before preparing or eating food.
- Remind children to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before eating. Younger children should be supervised to ensure proper handwashing with soap and thorough drying.
- Promptly clean and disinfect surfaces contaminated by vomit or stool. Use a disinfectant effective against norovirus, such as a bleach-based cleaner, and follow all label instructions carefully.
- Keep children home when they are sick. Children who are vomiting or have diarrhea should remain home until their symptoms resolve. Reinforce good hand hygiene during and after illness.

For more information, visit **nyc.gov/health** and search for *norovirus* & <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/infections/Pages/norovirus-what-to-do-if-your-child-catches-this-highly-contagious-stomach-bug.aspx>.

If you are concerned about your child's symptoms, please contact your child's school physician, school nurse, or healthcare provider.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Lawrence, MD FAAP

Medical Director
Office of School Health