

## The six step hand washing guide:



1. Wash palms of hands



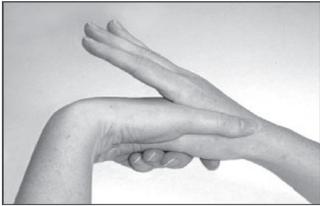
2. Wash between fingers at the back of hands



3. Wash between fingers palm to palm.



4. Wash palm area.



5. Pay attention to your thumb and thumb joint.



6. Wash finger tips paying attention to nails and dry hands well with clean disposable towel discarding correctly.

## Comments, compliments, concerns or complaints

South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is concerned about the quality of care you receive and strives to maintain high standards of health care.

However we do appreciate that there may be an occasion where you, or your family, feel dissatisfied with the standard of service you receive. Please do not hesitate to tell us about your concerns as this helps us to learn from your experience and to improve services for future patients.

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

This service aims to advise and support patients, families and carers and help sort out problems quickly on your behalf. This service is available, and based, at The James Cook University Hospital but also covers the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton, our community hospitals and community health services. Please ask a member of staff for further information.

If you require this information in a different format please contact Freephone 0800 0282451

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# Viral Gastroenteritis (Diarrhoea and/or vomiting)

Information for patients and visitors - what you can do to help

Infection Prevention and Control

Diarrhoea and vomiting can occur for a number of different reasons, for example, antibiotics, other medications or existing medical conditions. However, diarrhoea and vomiting can also be due to infection. This leaflet will discuss viral gastroenteritis.

## What is viral gastroenteritis?

Viral gastroenteritis is an illness caused by a number of different viruses. The most common being Norovirus (often called winter vomiting virus) and Rotavirus (which predominantly affects children). Norovirus is most commonly responsible for outbreaks of diarrhoea and vomiting within hospital wards and the community setting.

## What are the symptoms?

Viral gastroenteritis can cause any of the following symptoms,

- Nausea
- Projectile vomiting
- Profuse watery diarrhoea
- Headache, fever & malaise

## How is it transmitted?

- From close contact with other people who are ill with viral gastroenteritis
- From indirect contact with the environment that has been contaminated by unwashed hands
- From food contaminated by someone who has viral gastroenteritis
- From raw or undercooked food

## Who can it affect?

Anyone, but the very young and the elderly are particularly vulnerable.

## Why is it a problem?

Viral gastroenteritis spreads easily in the hospital and community setting due to the close contact between people. Large numbers of patients and staff can be affected which results in an outbreak situation (the ward is closed to admissions and special precautions are put into place).

## How long does the illness last?

Generally the illness will resolve within 48 hours.

## Can I visit my relative when he or she has vomiting and diarrhoea?

Visiting would usually be discouraged but always discuss with the nurse in charge. Please avoid bringing children into visit during the outbreak.

If your relative has vomiting or diarrhoea they may be in an isolation room. Please make sure you wash your hands on entering and leaving your relative's room. If you have direct contact with your relative then please make sure you wear plastic apron and gloves.

If you have vomiting or diarrhoea then please do not visit the ward until 48 hours after your last symptom / episode of diarrhoea and/or vomiting. This is very important as you could pass on your illness to other patients, many of whom are frail and elderly.

If your relative is waiting for transfer to another ward, hospital or nursing home this could be delayed until the outbreak has ended. The nurse who is looking after your patient will explain the reasons for this if it happens.