



## **NOROVIRUS**

### *Information Sheet for Patients and Visitors*

#### **What is Norovirus?**

Norovirus causes a viral gastrointestinal illness, generally lasting 1-2 days. Often referred to as the “stomach flu”, it is highly contagious.

- Common symptoms include vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Fever and stomach cramps may be present

#### **How is Norovirus Spread?**

Direct contact: When a person comes into direct contact with the feces or vomit of an ill person

Indirect contact: When the virus contaminates the environment and lives on surfaces (i.e. doorknob, light switch, etc.) that is then touched by other people. Norovirus can survive on hard surfaces for up to 12 hours and only a small amount of this virus is needed to cause infection.

People exposed to the virus usually develop symptoms of illness within 24 to 48 hours.

#### **How is Norovirus prevented?**

- A person in hospital with symptoms of norovirus will be isolated (usually in a room by themselves)
- A long-sleeved gown and gloves will be worn by all healthcare providers and visitors.
- An isolation sign will be placed on the door to remind others who enter the room about these special precautions
- The room and the equipment used in the room will be cleaned and disinfected regularly
- Everyone who leaves the patient room must clean their hands thoroughly

#### **What about Family/Visitors?**

Visitors will be required to wear a long-sleeved gown and gloves while visiting in the room. Before leaving the room, visitors must remove the gloves and gown and dispose of them in the garbage container and the linen hamper located in the patient room. After disposing of the gloves and gown, they must then clean their hands.