Summary: If you experience symptoms of diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, chills please take the following precautions below, as you may be experiencing Norovirus.

Norovirus: Fecal/Oral Transmission

Issue description: Norovirus outbreaks are common. Due to the highly infectious nature, it is necessary to have an established outbreak response plan to combat a prolonged outbreak among people. Outbreaks can be identified and contained early with understanding of the typical symptoms and with proper infection-control measures.

Transmission: Norovirus is highly contagious due to its extremely low infectious dose. Transmission of norovirus is primarily through person-to-person contact, but also through: contaminated surfaces (i.e., fomites), contaminated food, contaminated water (including ice), swallowing of aerosolized particles of vomitus.

Symptoms: Symptoms begin a median of 33 (range, 12–48) hours after exposure to the virus. Symptoms may include: • vomiting • diarrhea, typically watery and without blood • nausea • low-grade fever • abdominal cramps • malaise • chills

Treatment: There is no specific treatment for norovirus. Because many patients have both vomiting and diarrhea, precautions should be taken to avoid dehydration, especially in the very young and very old.

Outbreak Prevention and Detection: Norovirus is not reportable per se in Oregon, but Oregon Administrative Rule 333-018-0000 requires that all outbreaks of any disease be reported and investigated by the Local Health Department (LHD).

An outbreak is defined as more cases than expected for a given population and time period. For example, two children in a 25- person classroom with vomiting or diarrhea within one week would be more than expected and must be reported to the local health department. Similarly, two or more students on the same sports team with similar symptoms within a week would probably represent an outbreak. (If in doubt, consult your local health department.) Schools should encourage staff routinely to record medical reasons for school absences. This would allow the school to quickly identify whether absences are due to a similar illness, such as acute gastroenteritis.

Such information (examples: when illness began, symptoms, how long one has been ill) should certainly be collected during an outbreak.

For a complete list of reportable diseases, visit:
Recommendations:

Practice proper hygiene, especially good hand washing.

- Wash your hands thoroughly after using the bathroom or changing diapers.
- Wash your hands before preparing food.
- Wash your hands before preparing and feeding bottles or foods to an infant. Also wash your hands, before touching an infant's mouth or other items that go into an infant's mouth.
- Keep all objects that enter infants’ mouths (such as pacifiers and teethers) clean.

Know when to seek care for diarrheal illness

- **People with diarrhea** should see a health care provider if they have any of the following:
  - Fever — even a low fever
  - Blood in their stool (poop)
  - Diarrhea — often and in large amounts
  - Vomiting (throwing up) that doesn’t stop
  - Signs of dehydration, particularly in infants.
    - Sleepiness
    - Sunken eyes
    - No tears when crying
    - Fewer wet diapers than normal

- **Babies and toddlers with diarrhea** should be seen by a health care provider promptly if they are any of the following.
  - Under six months old
  - Under 18 pounds
  - A premature baby
  - A baby with chronic medical conditions or other existing illness

- **Children older than three years and adults with diarrhea** should see a health care provider if they:
  - Have a history of chronic medical conditions or other existing illness
  - Are age 65 and older

People with diarrhea should not go to school or child care, handle food or care for patients.

- Restrictions are usually in place while people can spread the disease, particularly while they still have vomiting or diarrhea.
• Your health care provider and public health officials will tell you when the restrictions can be lifted based on the illness.

**Cleaning up vomit and other unpleasant tasks:**

Staff who clean up vomit or diarrhea should take these precautions to reduce their risk of infection.

**General Principles:**

- Handle with care anything contaminated with vomit or diarrhea:
  - Wear protective gear (gloves, masks & gowns)
  - Soak up vomit & diarrhea with disposable cloths or absorbents like cat litter.

- Clean first, then disinfect:
  - Cleaning is the removal of germs and foreign material from surfaces or objects. It is done using water and detergent.
  - Disinfecting is the killing of germs on surfaces or objects. Chemicals such as bleach are used to kill germs.
  - Disinfecting after cleaning kills germs that remain on surfaces after cleaning, which further decreases the risk of spreading infection.
  - Prepare a 3500 ppm bleach solution by mixing 1 cup of household bleach to 1 gallon of water. If you are using concentrated bleach, then decrease the amount of bleach to ¾ cup of bleach to a gallon of water.
  - Prepare fresh bleach solution daily

**Cleaning specific things**

- **Carpets and upholstery:** carefully remove vomit and diarrhea; clean contaminated carpet or upholstery with detergent and hot water; steam clean at ≥158º F for 5 minutes or 212ºF for 1 minute; do not vacuum (2).

- **Furniture, floors and other hard, non-porous surfaces:** carefully remove vomit and diarrhea; clean contaminated furniture and other hard surfaces with detergent and hot water; disinfect with 1000–5000 ppm bleach solution (see above).

- **Fixtures and fitting in toilet areas:** carefully remove vomit and diarrhea; clean contaminated fixtures and fitting with detergent and hot water; disinfect with 1000–5000 ppm bleach solution (see above).

- **Cloth items and plush toys (e.g., stuffed animals, bedding, mattress covers,):** carefully remove vomit and diarrhea; wash items in a pre-wash cycle, then use a regular wash cycle with detergent; dry items at a temperature greater than 170º F; do not mix soiled and clean items in one load; it is better to discard soiled cloth items than to risk exposure during cleaning (2).

**Wash your hands (with soap and water) after any cleaning of vomit or diarrhea.**