

# INFLUENZA OR NOROVIRUS? KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!

Influenza is a respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus which commonly starts spreading in the fall and into spring. Influenza can be very serious, especially in very young children, the elderly or those with weakened immune systems. Norovirus is a very contagious viral illness that is not usually severe, comes on quickly and most people get better within one to two days.

## Spot the differences between influenza and norovirus

### Influenza

- Sudden onset of headache
- Fever (over 38°C or 100°F)
- Muscle aches and fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Runny nose, chills, sore throat, cough

### Norovirus

- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Stomach pain
- Sudden onset of watery diarrhea
- Headache, body aches, fever, fatigue

## Preventing influenza

- Get the flu shot!
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw out the issue immediately
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid large crowds and stay home when you are sick
- Keep common surfaces and items clean and disinfected

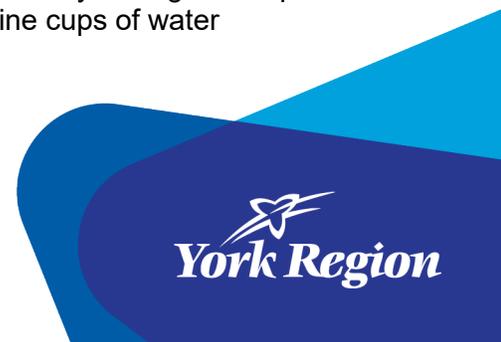
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## Preventing the spread of Norovirus

- Stay home for at least 48 hours after symptoms stop
- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water, especially after using the toilet or changing diapers and before preparing, handling and eating food
- Wear gloves when cleaning up vomit or diarrhea. Clean surfaces using detergent and water
- Remove and wash clothes and linen that may have vomit or feces on it
- Keep sick individuals out of areas where food is handled or prepared
- Anyone who is sick should not handle or prepare food for at least 48 hours after symptoms stop
- Disinfect a surface using a chlorine bleach solution by mixing one cup of bleach in nine cups of water

## PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675  
TTY 1-866-512-6228  
[york.ca/healthyschools](http://york.ca/healthyschools)



# INFLUENZA OR NOROVIRUS?



## INFLUENZA

- Respiratory viral illness
- Typically spreads in the fall and throughout winter into spring
- **Free seasonal flu vaccine is available** to those who live, work or attend school in Ontario
- Populations most at risk for flu complications include: babies and young children, elderly adults, pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions or weakened immune systems



## NOROVIRUS

- Gastrointestinal viral illness
- Commonly circulates in late fall and winter months (November-February)
- No vaccine available for prevention
- Very contagious and comes on quickly, but usually not severe for most people.
- Majority of people infected get better after 1-3 days

### SYMPTOMS

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Fever (over 38°C or 100°F)</li> <li>• Muscle aches/fatigue</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> <li>• Runny nose, chills, sore throat, cough</li> <li>• Nausea and vomiting (rare in adults, but can occur in children)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vomiting</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Stomach pain/cramps</li> <li>• Watery diarrhea</li> <li>• Headache, body aches, fever and fatigue</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

### PREVENTION



#### Get the free flu vaccine!



Avoid large crowds and stay home when you are sick



Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. If not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer



Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Use a tissue and throw it out immediately (if not available, cough into your sleeve)



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth



Keep common surfaces and items clean and disinfected



Stay home if you are sick, and do not handle or prepare food for at least 48 hours after symptoms stop



Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water, especially after using the toilet, changing diapers, and before preparing, handling and/or eating food



Wear gloves when cleaning up vomit and/or diarrhea. For surfaces and shared items, clean using detergent and water and disinfect using a chlorine bleach solution



Remove and wash clothes/linen that may have vomit and/or feces on them



Keep sick individuals out of areas where food is handled or prepared

### \*IMPORTANT REMINDERS\*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>You cannot get influenza from the influenza vaccine</b></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Even though some people refer to it as "stomach flu" norovirus is not caused by the influenza virus</b></li> </ul> |
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1-800-361-5653

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