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MAINTENANCE MINUTE

Norovirus in the Summer

Norovirus outbreaks can occur throughout the year, causing approximately 20 million cases of acute gastroenteritis each year and up to 70,000 hospitalizations.

When **people are in close contact it is more easily spread**, such as in nursing homes, summer camps, college campus summer programs, and cruise ships.

Over **60% of norovirus outbreaks are experienced in health care facilities**, with a majority taking place in long-term care centers.

In food service settings, **54% of outbreaks are caused by infected food workers touching ready-to-eat foods** with their bare hands before serving them.

The virus is very hard to kill, staying on counter-tops for up to 14 days. One study found **n orovirus can be spread from one hard surface to another by fingertip touch** even after the virus had dried for 15 minutes.



[Download the CDC Guideline for Prevention Control of Norovirus](#)

What are the **best steps to prevent an outbreak of norovirus**? The CDC has a number of recommendations for healthcare facilities, which can be applied in other situations:

- Actively **promote hand hygiene** in areas affected by outbreaks of norovirus.
- **Use soap and water for hand washing.**
- If hands have not been in direct contact with a sick person, use **FDA-compliant alcohol-based hand sanitizer (60-95% alcohol).**
- **Increase cleaning to twice daily** during outbreaks.
- **Clean/disinfect high-touch surfaces three times daily** using **EPA-approved** products that

list norovirus effectiveness, such as **hydrogen peroxide-based [Diversey Oxivir TB Disinfectant](#)** or [Spray Nine](#).

- When preparing foods, **rinse produce and clean/sanitize surfaces** and utensils.
- Food service workers need to **wear gloves or use utensils when touching food** and wash hands thoroughly with soap and water (particularly after using the restroom).

Be sure to **read the disinfectant's label carefully to ensure it is EPA-registered for effectiveness against norovirus** and allow adequate dwell time. It is best practice to clean the surface before applying the disinfectant.

[Read more about Oxivir TB Disinfectant, effective against Norovirus](#)

Fitch Co | 2201 Russell Street | P: 800.933-4824 | F: 401.727.2244 | customerservice@fitchco.com |

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