

How is it treated?

Rotavirus cannot be treated with antibiotics, but symptoms may be relieved by:

- drinking plenty of fluids
- Paracetamol to reduce fever/pain

See a doctor if symptoms are severe or the illness doesn't improve.

What about staying away from work/school/preschool?

Infected people should be excluded from work, school, or early childhood centres until they have been free of symptoms for at least 48 hours.



Other resources available on gastrointestinal illnesses:

- Norovirus
- Campylobacter
- Salmonella
- Giardia
- Yersinia
- E. coli O157 (VTEC)

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Communicable Diseases
Community and Public Health

(a division of the Canterbury District Health Board)

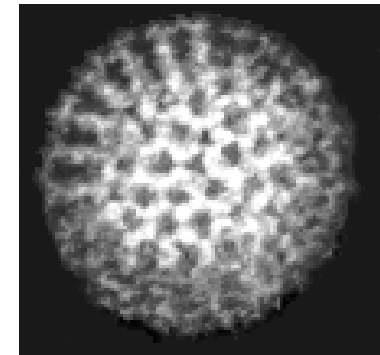
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ROTAVIRUS

(Viral Gastroenteritis)



Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

What is Rotavirus?

Rotavirus is a virus which causes gastrointestinal illness (vomiting and diarrhoea) and is highly infectious.

It is the most common viral cause of diarrhoea in children aged 6-24 months.

People of any age can become infected.

How is it caught?

Rotavirus is passed in the faeces (poo) of infected people and enters the body through a person's mouth.

People become infected by:

- By consuming food or drink that has been contaminated by infected people.
- Found on/touching toys and hard surfaces.
- By an infected person sneezing and coughing.

People are most infectious while they have diarrhoea.

What are the Symptoms?

Symptoms usually occur from 1-3 days after exposure to the virus and generally last for 4-6 days.

The Most common symptoms are:

- Diarrhoea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Abdominal pain



Young children can become dehydrated and may need to be seen by a doctor.

The virus can be present in the faeces up to 10 days after the onset of symptoms.

Frequent and thorough hand washing with plenty of soap and water will prevent the spread.

How do you prevent spread?

From people:

Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water:

- After changing children's nappies or going to the toilet.
- Before preparing food.
- Before eating or feeding infants and children.

Do not prepare food for others for at least 48 hours after all symptoms have cleared.

From the environment:

- Surfaces should be washed with soap and water before disinfecting.
- Chlorine-based household bleaches will kill rotavirus and help prevent spread from objects and surfaces in the environment.
- Always follow the manufacturers' directions for dilution.
- Remove and wash all contaminated linen and clothes with hot water and detergent