



Rotavirus



What is Rotavirus?

A virus that causes an infection of the intestinal tract that leads to severe diarrhea and vomiting in young children and infants. Rotavirus is highly contagious and one of the most common cause of severe diarrhea in infants and young children. Adults can also be infected, though disease tends to be milder in healthy adults, it can be more severe in adults with weakened immune systems.

After being exposed to rotavirus, you may become sick in 1 to 3 days. Symptoms usually last 3 to 7 days.

How is Rotavirus spread?

- When infected with rotavirus, the virus is shed in your stool. This is how rotavirus gets into the environment and can then infect others. Rotavirus is spread by the fecal-oral route.
- Rotavirus can be found in the stool several days before the diarrhea begins, and for up to 10 days after symptoms begin to improve.
- Eating or drinking food or water contaminated by persons infected with rotavirus.
- Touching surfaces or objects contaminated with rotavirus and then touching their mouth before handwashing.
- Having direct contact with persons infected with rotavirus.

How is Rotavirus treated?

- There is no specific treatment or cure for rotavirus.
- Typically, treatment consists of preventing dehydration by replacing fluids lost due to diarrhea and/or vomiting.
- Occasionally, symptoms can be severe and hospitalization is required for intravenous (IV) fluid replacement. It is important to seek medical care if

dehydration becomes severe.

How can Rotavirus be prevented?

Rotavirus is a vaccine preventable disease.

- A vaccine to prevent rotavirus is recommended for infants. The vaccine is 85% to 95% effective at preventing severe rotavirus disease in infants and young children.
- Practice good hand hygiene especially after using the bathroom, changing diapers or before preparing, serving or eating food.
- Proper food storage and preparation.

Symptoms of Rotavirus:

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- Dehydration

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CDC Public Information

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