



Rotavirus

What is Rotavirus?

A virus that causes an infection of the intestinal tract that leads to severe diarrhea. Rotavirus is highly contagious and the most common cause of severe diarrhea in infants and young children. Adults can also be infected, though disease tends to be milder.

How is Rotavirus spread?

- Rotavirus is spread from hand to mouth.
- 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?

- 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.

How can Rotavirus be prevented?

- 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:

- Vomiting
- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- Symptoms usually last 3-8 days

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CDC Public Information

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