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# Durham County Communicable Disease Update for Healthcare Providers

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## Norovirus and Influenza Season

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### Announcements

- Communicable Disease (CD) Reporting Forms are now located on our website, under Health Resources and Data. <http://dconc.gov/index.aspx?page=874>
- State CD reporting statute:

[10A NCAC 41A .0101](#)

CDC Flu website link for  
Healthcare Professionals  
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm>

### Important Numbers

Main Number	(919) 560-7600
CD Program	(919) 560-7896
FAX:	(919) 560-7716
Immunization Clinic	(919) 560-7608
Tuberculosis Clinic	(919) 560-7633
Adult Health Clinic	(919) 560-7658

The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services is alerting health care providers and the public to protect themselves against NOROVIRUS and to be aware of symptoms to avoid transmitting the virus to others.

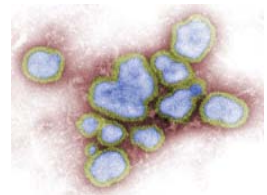
SYMPTOMS of norovirus illness include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and possibly stomach cramping. Some people may also have fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and a general sense of tiredness. In most people, the illness lasts for about one or two days. However, some people - especially young children and the elderly - can quickly become dehydrated and might require medical care or even hospitalization. There are no specific medications to treat norovirus.

DIAGNOSTIC TESTS are available at the NC State Laboratory of Public Health and many clinical laboratories. Real-time reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-qPCR) is the most widely used diagnostic assay for detecting norovirus. Health care providers should report all possible outbreaks of acute gastroenteritis, including suspected outbreaks of norovirus to their county Health Department.

Ill patients with suspected norovirus infection should be instructed to wash their hands frequently with soap and water, especially after toilet visits and before preparing, serving or eating food or drink. Hand sanitizer gels are not effective against norovirus. The virus can be spread for days and sometimes weeks after the illness ends.

For more information about norovirus, visit: <http://epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/norovirus/outbreaks.html>

INFLUENZA continues to be widespread throughout the majority of the country. The CDC has received several reports of severe respiratory illnesses among young and middle-aged adults, many of whom were infected with the 2009 influenza A (H1N1) virus.



EARLY ANTIVIRAL TREATMENT can shorten the duration of symptoms, reduce the risk for complications and death, and shorten the duration of hospitalization. Key messages from the CDC are:

Decisions about starting antiviral treatment should not wait for test results or laboratory confirmation of influenza. A negative rapid influenza test does NOT exclude a diagnosis of influenza and should not be used to make treatment or infection control decisions.

Antiviral treatment is recommended as early as possible for patients with suspected or confirmed influenza who are at risk for flu complications, have severe or progressive illnesses, or are hospitalized. Antiviral treatment can be considered for any previously healthy, symptomatic outpatient not at high risk with suspected or confirmed influenza on the basis of clinical judgment, especially if it can be initiated early.