

# Public Health Advisory

## Increase of Norovirus cases in Pangnirtung

**May 18, 2024**

## Pangnirtung, Nunavut

The Department of Health is advising Nunavummiut, especially parents of babies and young children, that there has been an increase in Norovirus cases in Pangnirtung. Norovirus, also known as a stomach illness, is highly contagious and can infect anyone, but most severe cases are in Elders and children.

The infection is spread mainly through contact with the throw up or stool of a person sick with Norovirus. The virus can spread easily from person to person and can also spread through food, water or ice that has been touched by a sick person.

Norovirus can spread quickly in places like daycare centers, schools, and airplanes. While the highest number of norovirus illnesses happens from November to April in Canada, there is currently an increase in cases in Pangnirtung.

If you or your child are mildly ill, stay home and avoid contact with others until your symptoms are gone.

Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, fever, and diarrhea. Sometimes fever, chills and muscle aches. The illness begins quickly and can last 1 to 3 days. Some of the best ways to prevent this virus are to:

- Wash your hands often, especially before preparing meals or after changing a baby's diaper, and after using the washroom.
- Rest and drink plenty of fluids (avoid pop, energy drinks, or other sugary fluids).
- Cleaning surfaces such as countertops, doorknobs, and bathrooms often with hot soapy water.
- Trying to avoid unnecessary contact with people who are sick.

Anyone with vomiting or diarrhea should not make meals for the family to decrease the risk of spreading the virus to family members. Dirty laundry should be washed in hot water and dried at a high temperature setting. Remember, kissing and touching babies can spread germs. Keep them healthy by staying away when you are sick.

