



# Preparing for Norovirus Season in Schools

November 20, 2024

The logo consists of a red square containing the letters 'TN' in white, serif font. Below the red square is a thin white horizontal line, and below that is a dark blue horizontal bar. A small 'TM' trademark symbol is located at the bottom right corner of the dark blue bar.

**TN**

# Norovirus Overview

# Norovirus Background

Causes acute, self-limited diarrhea along with

- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Stomach cramps
- Fever
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Body aches

Incubation usually 12-48 hours

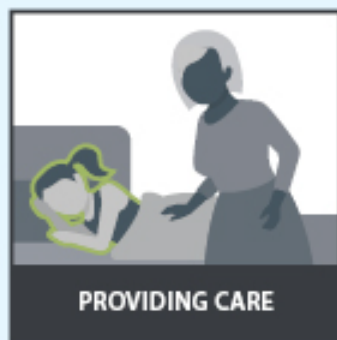
Duration typically 2-3 days

Can affect everyone, but may be more severe in vulnerable populations

No long-term immunity to the virus



# How You Get Norovirus From People or Surfaces



Norovirus spreads when a person gets poop or vomit from an infected person in their mouth.



U.S. Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/norovirus](http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus)

# Norovirus

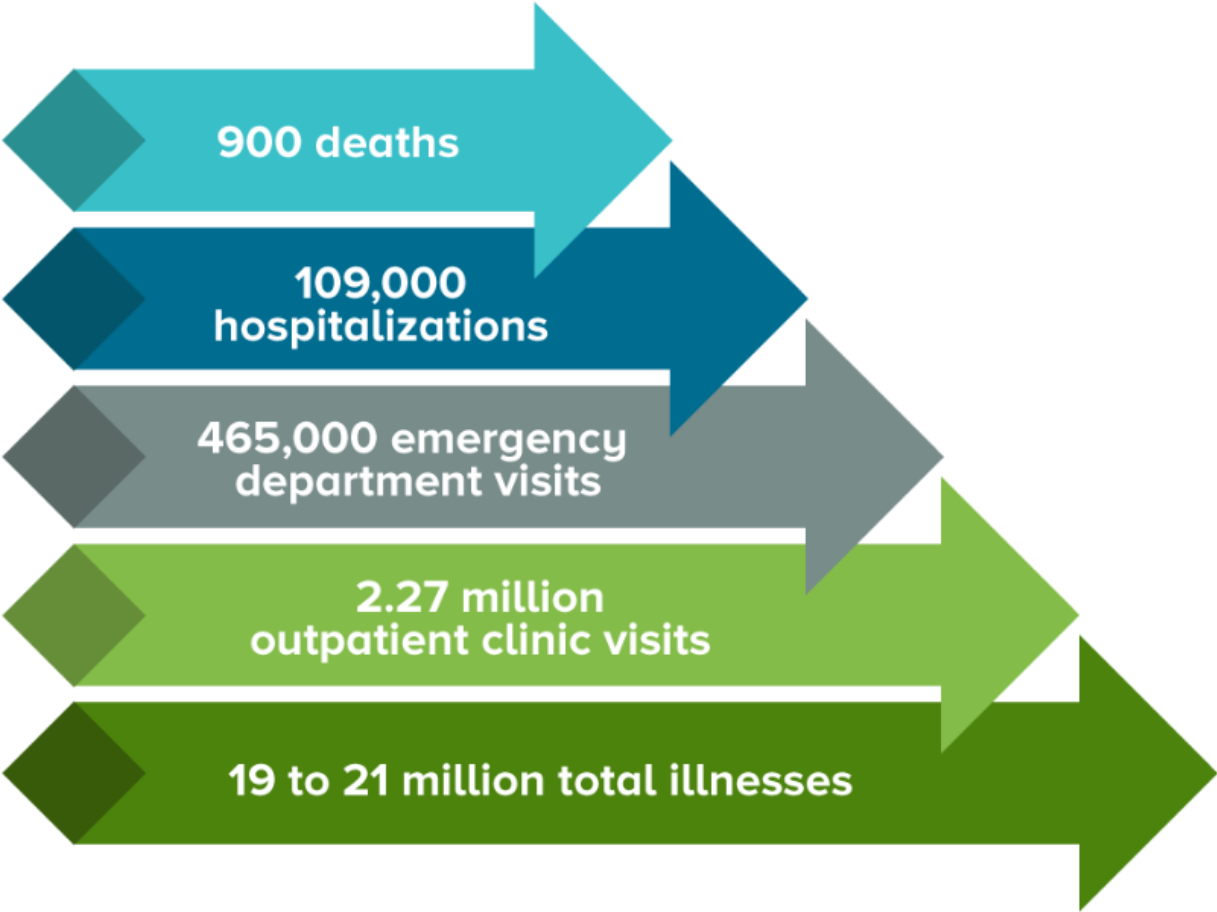
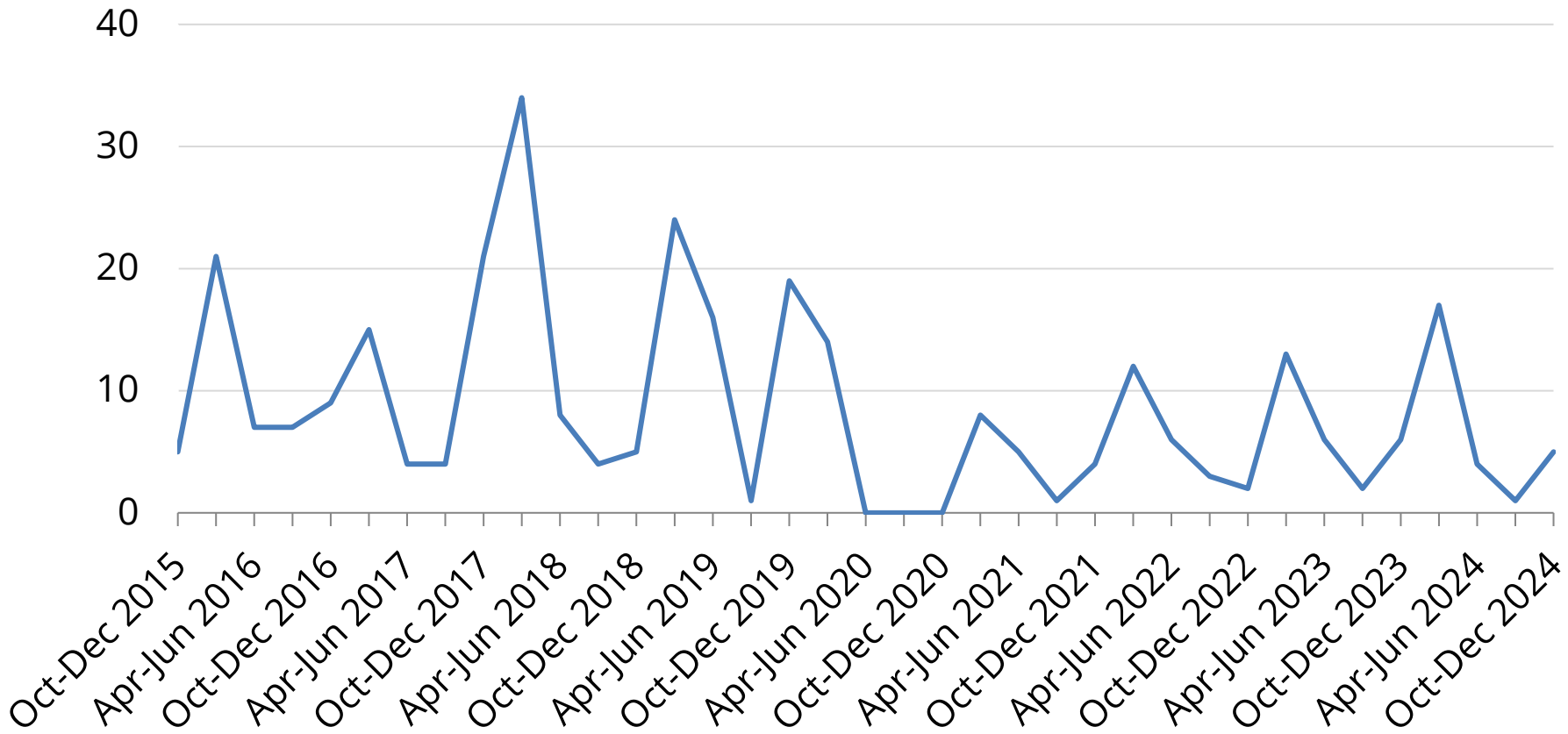


Figure: **Burden of Norovirus in the United States.** Estimates of the annual number of illnesses and associated outcomes for norovirus disease in the U.S., across all age groups. Lifetime risks of disease are based on a life expectancy of 79 years of age.

# Seasonality

## Number of Norovirus\*\* Outbreaks Reported by Quarter 2015-2024



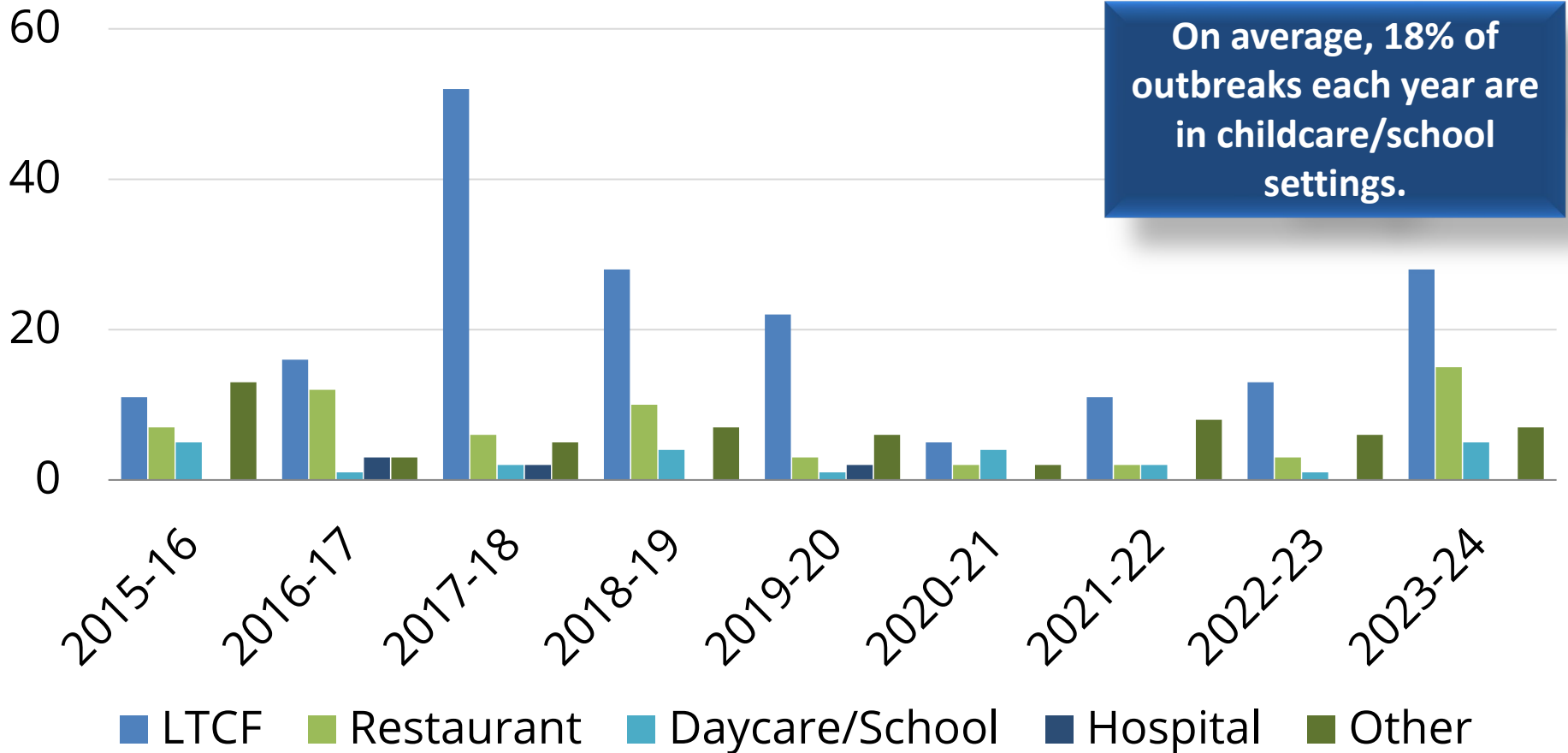
\*2024 data is preliminary

\*\* Contains confirmed and suspected outbreaks



# Setting

## Norovirus\*\* Outbreaks in TN by Setting



\*2024 data is preliminary

\*\* Contains confirmed and suspected outbreaks



**Great, but what do  
we do about it?**



# Before An Outbreak



**Establish and maintain plan**



**Communicate and educate**



**Clean with appropriate tools**

# Establish and maintain an outbreak plan

- Report a higher than normal number of staff and/or students with V/D
  - Chain of communication
  - Teachers, school nurses, administrative staff, local health department



# Communicate and educate

- Educate all staff about norovirus and outbreaks
  - During new employee training and/or annually
  - Local or state health department can assist
- Cross training to support coverage of ill employees
- Communication
  - Send-home letters to parents/guardians
  - Signage addressing hand hygiene

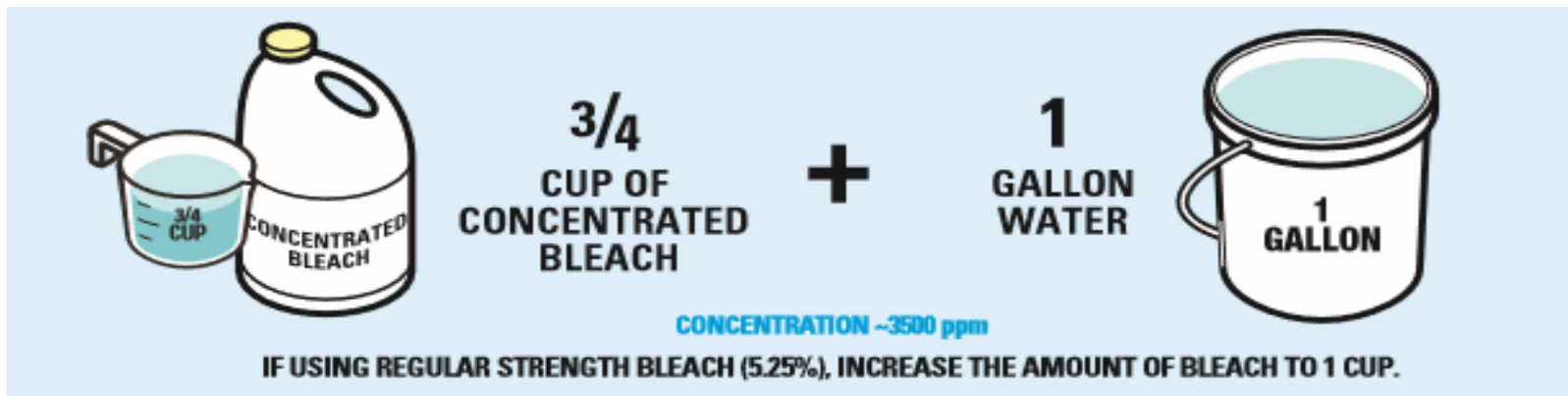
## ATTENTION!

BE SURE TO WASH YOUR HANDS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS



# Cleaning and Disinfecting for Norovirus

- Know how to clean certain surfaces and what chemicals to use
- Concentration will affect bleach mixture
- Verify if wipes, other tools are appropriate for norovirus
- Prepped kits or carts equipped for norovirus disinfection
- Advise food workers of proper hand washing, cleaning and sanitation of contaminated surfaces




# Norovirus Guidelines

- Guidelines for Schools
  - Outbreak prevention, detection, and control
  - Cleaning protocols
  - Staff and student exclusion criteria
  - Documentation of cases

**Tennessee Department of Health**  
Communicable and Environmental Diseases and Emergency Preparedness

**Recommendations for the Prevention and Control of Viral Gastroenteritis Outbreaks in Schools and Childcare Settings**

  
The logo features a red square with the white letters 'TN' on the left, and the text 'Department of Health' in blue on the right. A blue horizontal line is positioned below the 'TN' and the word 'Health'.

State of Tennessee  
Department of Health  
710 James Robertson Pkwy  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower  
Nashville, TN 37243

(615) 741-7247

Version 2  
Updated: November 11, 2023

Version 2 – Updated 11/11/2023

# During An Outbreak

Contact

Contact public health officials

Exclude

Exclude ill staff and students

Enhance

Enhance cleaning and disinfection practices

# Outbreak identification and reporting

- **All outbreaks are reportable to public health by TN law**
  - Report a higher than normal number of staff and/or students with V/D
  - Do NOT wait for laboratory test confirmation
  - Maintaining a line list of cases can help recognize an outbreak
- **Contact public health officials**
- Testing kits available through TDH Laboratory Services
  - Stool samples from ~3 - 5 ill persons within 48-72 hours after the onset of symptoms (up to 2 weeks)
  - Takes 2 positives to confirm outbreak

# Who you gonna call?

- Foodborne outbreak ([entericoutbreak.health@tn.gov](mailto:entericoutbreak.health@tn.gov))
- [Local or regional health department](#)

## Local and Regional Health Departments





# Ill staff and students

- Maintain a log of ill staff and students
- Staff
  - Should be symptom-free for 48 hours before returning to school.
- Students
  - Ill students should be picked up immediately.
  - Exclude from activities where they could infect others, pause communal activities
  - Should be symptom-free for 48 hours before returning to school.

## Appendix 6: Suggested Case Log (Line List)

N=Nausea, V=Vomiting, D=Diarrhea, AC=Abdominal Cramps, Fe=Fever, Ch=Chills, Hosp=Hospitalization

No.	Name	Staff/Resident	Age	Sex	Unit	Room No.	Onset Date	Recovery Date	N	V	D	Ac	Fe	Ch	Hosp.	Lab Results
1	Dr. Suzie	Staff	45	F			11/28/2021	11/30/2021	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Positive
2	Patrick	Resident	78	M	B	302	11/28/2021	12/5/2021	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Pending



# Enhanced cleaning and disinfection

- Disinfection
  - Wipe up vomit or diarrhea using appropriate method
  - Wear protective clothing, such as disposable gloves, apron and/or mask while sanitizing
  - Immediately sanitize with a disinfectant for norovirus
  - Focus on frequently touched surfaces
  - Dispose of paper towel/waste in a plastic bag or biohazard bag
    - Wash soiled linens with detergent and HOT water for the maximum available time setting
    - Do not shake any soiled linens or vacuum soiled carpets

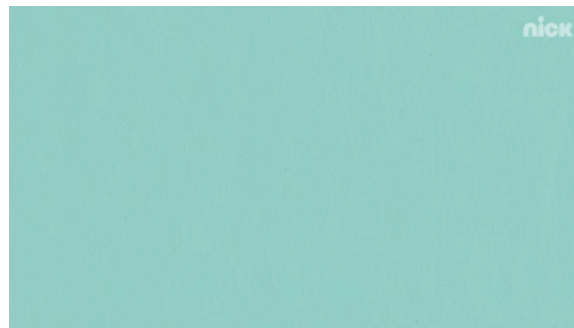
# Enhanced cleaning and disinfection

- Food Handling and Dining
  - Require food service staff to wear PPE
  - Ensure soap, clean water, and paper towels are available in dining areas
  - Throw away all potentially contaminated food
  - Continue for at least **96 hours** after last case's symptoms resolve



# Resolution of outbreak

- After 2+ incubation periods with no new cases
  - For norovirus, this is **around 4 days**
- Provide a final number or line list of cases to public health
- Outbreaks can and SHOULD be used as a learning opportunity
  - Hot wash with public health and school staff available



## Tennessee Department of Health

Communicable and Environmental Diseases and Emergency Preparedness

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