

Gastroenteritis Guidelines

Bacterial: Campylobacter, Salmonella, Shigella, E. coli. **Parasitic:** Cryptosporidium, Giardia. **Viral:** Norovirus, Rotavirus

WHAT IS GASTROENTERITIS?

Gastroenteritis, also known as stomach flu, is an intestinal infection causing gastrointestinal symptoms.

COMMON SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Fever/chills
- Fatigue
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea - may be bloody
- Abdominal pain/cramps
- Indigestion
- Lightheadedness/headache
- Loss of appetite/Weight loss (parasitic)

CONTAGIOUS TIME PERIOD:

Bacterial: While bacteria is present in stool, can be weeks to months. **Parasitic:** diarrheal phase. **Viral:** 3 weeks after symptoms resolve.

TIME FROM EXPOSURE TO SYMPTOMS:

Bacterial: 1-7 days; usually day 2-5, varies by bacteria source. **Parasitic:** 3-14 days. **Viral:** 12-72 hours.

SPREAD BY:

Fecal-oral contact, person-to-person, food, water, animal-to-person, environmental surfaces.

TREATMENT / SELF-CARE:

Rest, fluid intake, usually improves without seeking treatment. Antidiarrheal medications. Antibiotics may be prescribed.

ACTION AT SCHOOL:

Exclude the child from school until fever-free (99.9 F or below) for 24 hours without the use of any fever reducing medications and asymptomatic for 24 hours. Exclude until asymptomatic for 48 hours with norovirus.

CONSIDERATIONS AND PREVENTION MEASURES:

Good handwashing and hygiene. Proper disinfection of surfaces. Parasitic: No swimming for 2 weeks after diarrhea resolves.

- Bacterial sources - reportable to State and local health departments.

