

Information regarding infectious gastroenteritis

What is infectious gastroenteritis?

Infectious gastroenteritis is a type of gastroenteritis mainly caused by viruses, etc. Viruses contaminating on your hands or food enter through the mouth, then travel and multiply in the stomach, leading to vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. While symptoms in healthy people are usually minor, they may be more severe in children and elderly, and may result in death due to choking on vomit. There is no specific treatment method, and treatment is usually provided to ease painful symptoms.

How is it transmitted?

Viruses accumulate in bivalves such as oysters. If the bivalve is eaten raw or is not sufficiently cooked, a virus can be transmitted. In addition, if an infected person cooks without washing his/her hands, any food he/she touches may be contaminated, and any person eating the food can become infected. Furthermore, viruses can remain on a person's hands or in the environment due to improper disposal of feces/vomit or inadequate hand-washing after handling. In turn, the viruses can enter the body and cause infection.

When does it usually occur?

Usually, the number of infected patients increases around November and may continue until March, with a peak in December. Reports of mass infection at childcare facilities have become especially common. Since children at a childcare facility spend a lot of time in the same room, share the same toys, etc., noroviruses can easily spread.

How can it be prevented?

Washing your hands is the most effective method to prevent the spread of infection.

In order to protect yourself, please follow the measures below, thoroughly washing your hands with soap and running water.

- Especially after using the restroom (toilet) or changing diapers
- Before cooking and eating
- Before taking medicine, or assisting others to take medicine

Please be sure to use disposable gloves, masks and aprons when handling and disposing of vomit or stool, and disinfect them with sodium hypochlorite (chlorine bleach). Thoroughly wash your hands with soap and running water after handling.