

## What kind of infection is it?

Astrovirus is a virus.

## How do people get infected?

- Astrovirus infection is more common in babies under 1 year old and young children under 5 years old.
- The virus is spread person to person by contact with stool (poop) from an infected person.
- Poor hand washing after using the bathroom.
- Outbreaks in day care centers.

## What are the usual symptoms?

- Illness usually starts 1-5 days after exposure.
- Vomiting, watery diarrhea, stomach pain or cramps, and occasionally fever.

## How long does it last?

- Usually 2-3 days.

## How is it treated?

- Prevent dehydration by drinking fluids. Sometimes anti-nausea medicines or IV fluids may be necessary if you or your child cannot keep down any fluids. Warning signs of dehydration include a dry mouth, decreased urination, or dizziness.
- Because this is a viral infection, antibiotics do not help and may make the diarrhea worse.

## Are there possible complications?

- Dehydration is the major complication.

## Comments:

- Wash hands carefully with soap and water after going to the bathroom or changing diapers, or cleaning up vomit or stool.
- Clean contaminated surfaces with disinfectant or bleach solution (5-25 tablespoons of household bleach per gallon of water).
- People with diarrhea should not prepare food.

## Resources:

- [CDC handout for norovirus, which is very similar to astrovirus](#)