

ROTAVIRAL INFECTION

****Reportable to local or state health department****

Diarrhea caused by rotavirus is common in infants and young children during the winter months. It can spread quickly to others, including adult caregivers, in childcare settings.

CAUSE

Rotaviruses.

SYMPTOMS

Vomiting, fever, and watery diarrhea. Sometimes a cough, runny nose, or ear infection is present. Symptoms may last 4 days or longer. Children with rotavirus diarrhea are sometimes hospitalized because of dehydration.

SPREAD

Rotaviruses leave the body through the stool of an infected person and enter another person when hands, food, or objects (such as toys) contaminated with stool are placed in the mouth. Spread can occur when people do not wash their hands after using the toilet or changing diapers. Also, rotavirus can be spread through droplets that are expelled from the nose and mouth during sneezing and coughing.

INCUBATION

It takes about 1 to 3 days from the time a person is exposed until symptoms begin.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

From 1 to 2 days before until 10 days after symptoms begin.

DIAGNOSIS

A blood test for rubella should be done 3 to 5 days after the symptoms begin. Other laboratory specimens may be collected.

EXCLUSION

Childcare and School: Until diarrhea and vomiting have stopped for 24 hours. Exclusion may be longer during an outbreak.

See: [NAC 441A.670](#)

TREATMENT

No specific treatment is available. Vomiting and diarrhea may lead to dehydration, which may become a medical emergency. Ask a healthcare provider how to prevent dehydration.

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Get vaccinated: The FDA has approved RotaTeq™ and Rotarix™ vaccines to prevent rotavirus. RotaTeq™ is licensed for infants 6 to 32 weeks of age and is given by mouth as a three-dose series. Rotarix™ is licensed for infants 6 to 24 weeks of age and is given orally as a two-dose series. A different vaccine for rotavirus (Rotashield™) was withdrawn from the market in 1999 due to an increased risk of intussusception, a blockage or twisting of the

intestines. Studies of RotaTeq™ and Rotarix™ show that they do not cause an increased risk of intussusception.

- Cover nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing, or cough/sneeze into your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after using the toilet, after changing diapers and before preparing or eating food. Thorough hand washing is the best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Staff should closely monitor hand washing of all children after children have used the bathroom or have been diapered.
- Clean and disinfect diapering area and potty chairs after each use and bathroom toilets, sinks, and toys at least daily and when soiled.
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled.
- Clean and disinfect 25 feet surrounding all public vomiting incidents.

For more information, please contact your local health department.

[Southern Nevada Health District](#) (Clark County) 775-759-1300 (24 hours)

[Northern Nevada Public Health](#) (Washoe County) 775-328-2447 (24 hours)

[Carson City Health & Human Services](#) (Carson City, Douglas, Lyon Counties) 775-887-2190 (24 hours)

[Division of Public and Behavioral Health](#) (All other Counties) 775-400-0333 (24 hours)

Email: dpbhepi@health.nv.gov