

## Patient information factsheet

# Diarrhoea and/or vomiting outbreak

**There is currently an outbreak of diarrhoea and/or vomiting within the hospital.**

**We are working hard to contain this outbreak and have put a range of measures in place to help protect patients and visitors. This factsheet explains some of the changes that are currently in effect. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of your healthcare team.**

### **What is the cause of the outbreak?**

Diarrhoea and vomiting bugs in adults are often caused by norovirus (also called the 'winter vomiting bug'). The cause of the outbreak is unknown at the moment, however there are currently high levels of diarrhoea and/or vomiting in the community. We will collect and analyse samples to identify the cause of the outbreak in the hospital, which may be of viral origin.

### **Visiting restrictions**

Visiting has been restricted to compassionate visiting only.

**It is important that any visitors who have had symptoms of diarrhoea and vomiting avoid visiting the hospital until at least 72 hours after their last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.**

For the very latest information on visiting, please see our website:

<https://www.uhs.nhs.uk/for-visitors/southampton-general-hospital/current-restricted-visiting-access>

### **Preventing the spread of infection – how you can help**

#### **Handwashing**

The outbreak may be spread by contact with body fluids or contaminated environments such as toilets and door handles.

To help stop further spread:

- It is essential that you wash your hands thoroughly and regularly with soap and running water.
- You should also wash your hands before preparing or eating food and after going to the toilet or using a commode

#### **Isolation**

In order to prevent this outbreak spreading to other patients, affected patients will be isolated. This means being cared for in a single room or in a bay with other affected patients. If large numbers of patients are affected they may be cared for together in the same ward.

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If you are being cared for in isolation, you must remain on the ward in order to avoid putting others at risk of infection (this means not visiting the shops or restaurants, for example).

## Samples

In some cases, if you are affected by diarrhoea or vomiting we may need to obtain samples of faeces (poo) or vomit from you. It is important that we obtain these as quickly as possible, and we thank you or your cooperation on this matter.

## Bathroom and toilet facilities

If you are in a bay or side-room please ensure that you use the specially identified toilets and bathroom facilities to prevent spread to other patients.

## Drink plenty

To avoid dehydration, drink plenty of fluids. Even if you vomit or feel sick you should still have frequent sips, as you will keep some fluid down. Water should be the main drink, supplemented by fruit juice as this contains some sugar.

## Further information

### NHS UK

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/>

### Preventing infection - patient information

<https://www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Visitinghospital/Preventinginfection-patientinformation.pdf>

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