

NOROVIRUS OUTBREAKS IN MONTANA

A viral trend continues

Norovirus causes most enteric outbreaks in Montana. The virus spreads quickly and easily from infected people directly to others and through contaminated foods and surfaces. Symptoms are diarrhea, vomiting, nausea, and stomach pain, and it is often referred to as the stomach bug. To prevent norovirus, you should wash hands often, rinse fruits and vegetables, cook shellfish thoroughly, avoid cooking food for others while sick, and stay home when sick and for two days after symptoms stop. During outbreaks, norovirus samples should be submitted to the Montana Public Health Laboratory for sequencing, to understand more about the circulating strains of norovirus.



34 Annual average number of enteric illness outbreaks reported that are suspected or confirmed to be caused by norovirus, comprising 86% of all enteric outbreaks.

63% of norovirus outbreaks had at least one laboratory specimen



60% of those had at least two specimens, enough to qualify for sequencing



51% of qualifying outbreaks sequenced to determine the strain.



66% of sequenced outbreaks were caused by a variant GII.4 genotype