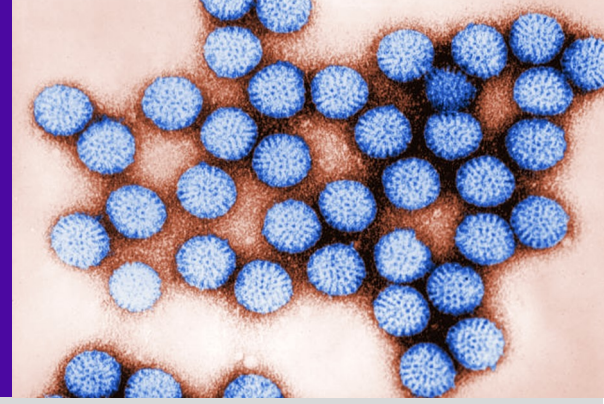


# ROTAVIRUS



Rotavirus is virus that spreads from person to person and mostly affects babies. The virus can cause swelling of the stomach and intestines. The virus also causes diarrhea (watery poop) and can last for three-eight days. Sometimes a baby may vomit (throw up), have a fever, or have stomach pain. When a baby loses too much water through diarrhea or vomiting, they can become dehydrated. Dehydration means that a person does not have enough water in their body for it to work normally. Dehydration can be serious especially in infants and young children.



## How is it spread?

Rotavirus is spread from person to person through the stool (poop)-to-mouth cycle:

- ▶ When someone is sick with rotavirus, the virus lives in their poop.
- ▶ A sick person can spread the virus when they do not wash their hands well and then touch items (e.g., toys, food, water, etc.) with their unclean hands, spreading the virus.
- ▶ A healthy person can get the virus when they touch their hands to an unclean item with rotavirus on it and then use their hands to touch their face, mouth, eat food, or drink water.



## What are the signs and symptoms?

*Symptoms in children can include:*

- ▶ Severe, watery diarrhea
- ▶ Vomiting (throwing up)
- ▶ Fever
- ▶ Stomach pain
- ▶ Symptoms can last from three-eight days

*\*Adults who get rotavirus may have milder symptoms.*



## What are the treatment options?

- ▶ There is no treatment for rotavirus.
- ▶ The virus may cause loss of water from the baby's body from vomiting and diarrhea, which can lead to dehydration.



### **Treatment continued...**

- ▶ Children can become dehydrated quickly and may have to go to the hospital. A dehydrated child may cry with few or no tears and may be very sleepy or fussy.
- ▶ A child or adult who is severely dehydrated is having a medical emergency. They should be taken to the hospital to receive fluids through their veins (through an IV).



### **How can it be prevented?**

**The best way for children to not get sick from rotavirus is for them to get vaccinated**

There are two types of vaccines, which are given in either two or three doses:

- ▶ The vaccine works best if the first dose is given before the child is 15 weeks of age and the last dose before they turn 8 months old.
- ▶ Rotavirus vaccine is given by mouth (orally).
- ▶ Rotavirus vaccines do not prevent diarrhea or vomiting caused by other viruses or germs.
- ▶ A child may get sick from rotavirus more than once, even if they have been vaccinated. Vaccinated children are much less likely to get sick from rotavirus. If they do get sick, their symptoms are usually less severe than unvaccinated children.



**Remember that washing hands often and thoroughly, especially after changing diapers, can help prevent the spread of rotavirus and other germs!**

**For more information about rotavirus vaccine, please review the vaccine information statement:**  
**[http://www.immunize.org/vis/vis\\_rotavirus.asp](http://www.immunize.org/vis/vis_rotavirus.asp)**

