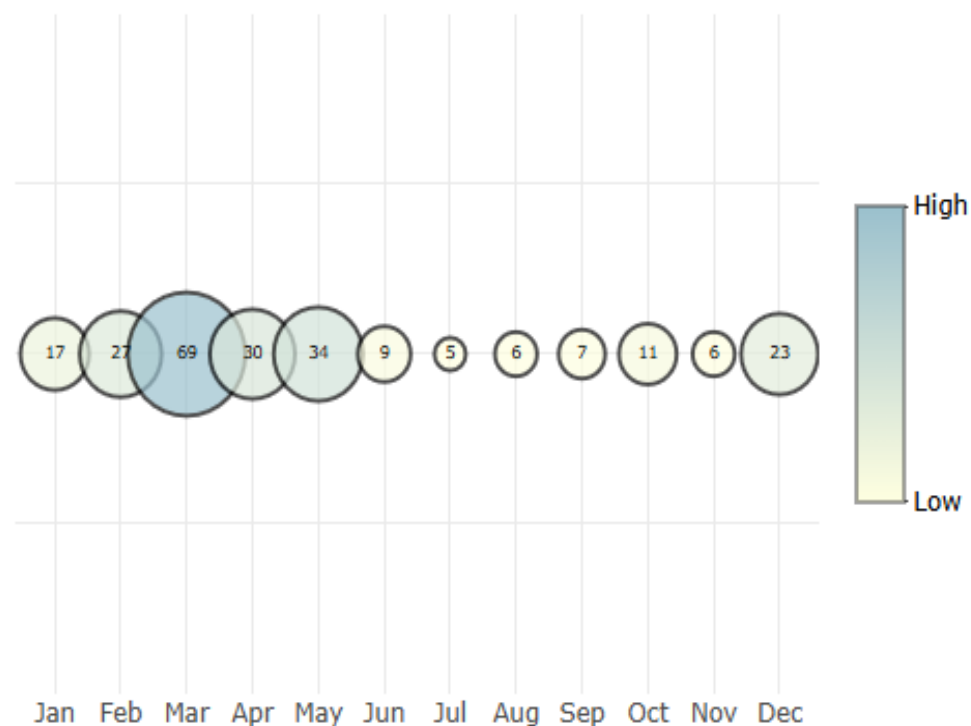


Norovirus

Seasonality

Norovirus infections are more common in cooler months, particularly from late fall through early spring. The virus thrives in colder conditions and spreads more easily in enclosed indoor environments during winter months.

Total Cases Reported Per Month in SWDH(2017–2024)



Causative Agent

Norovirus is a highly contagious virus that causes acute gastrointestinal illness.

Mode of Transmission

Norovirus spreads primarily through the fecal-oral route. Common transmission methods include:

- Consuming contaminated food or water
- Direct contact with infected individuals
- Touching contaminated surfaces and then touching the mouth

Symptoms

Symptoms typically develop 12 to 48 hours after exposure and last 1 to 3 days. Common symptoms include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Watery diarrhea
- Abdominal cramps
- Fever and chills
- Fatigue and muscle aches
- Dehydration in severe cases, particularly among young children, older adults, and immunocompromised individuals

Exposure Sources and Risk Factors

Common sources of Norovirus exposure include:

- Contaminated food, particularly raw or undercooked shellfish, fresh produce, and ready-to-eat foods handled by infected individuals
- Contaminated drinking water or recreational water
- Healthcare settings, cruise ships, schools, and daycare centers where outbreaks frequently occur
- Inadequate handwashing
- Risk factors for infection include close contact with infected individuals, consumption of contaminated food or water, and being in crowded or enclosed environments.

Preventive Measures

Preventing Norovirus infection involves several key hygiene and food safety practices:

- Frequent and thorough handwashing with soap and water (hand sanitizers are less effective)
- Properly cooking shellfish and other high-risk foods
- Cleaning and disinfecting contaminated surfaces with bleach-based disinfectants
- Avoiding food preparation when sick
- Properly handling and washing fresh produce
- Washing laundry contaminated with vomit or diarrhea promptly