

North Suburban YMCA Norovirus / Stomach Bug (Gastroenteritis) Policy

At North Suburban YMCA Camp, we take the health of our campers and staff very seriously. Gastroenteritis—commonly called the stomach bug or norovirus—is a highly contagious illness that spreads rapidly in close group settings like camps. Our goal is to act quickly to prevent further illness and ensure campers can safely return when they're fully recovered.

What Is Norovirus / Stomach Bug?

Norovirus is a viral infection that causes inflammation of the stomach and intestines. It spreads very easily through:

- Direct contact with someone who is infected
- Contaminated food or surfaces
- Vomiting or diarrhea particles (even microscopic amounts)

Common Symptoms

- Sudden vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Stomach cramps
- Nausea
- Fatigue or body aches
- Low-grade fever (occasionally)
- Symptoms usually appear 12–48 hours after exposure and may last 1–3 days, but individuals can remain contagious for up to 48 hours after symptoms stop.

Our Camp Policy

If a Camper Becomes Ill at Camp:

- The camper will be immediately removed from their group and monitored in a supervised, private area.
- Parents/guardians will be called for immediate same-day pick-up.

Return to Camp Requirements:

A camper may return to camp when:

- It has been at least 48 hours since their last episode of vomiting or diarrhea
- They are eating and drinking normally
- They are well enough to fully participate in camp activities
- We follow the 48-hour rule strictly to prevent outbreaks, as campers can still spread the virus even after feeling better.

Siblings Policy

- Siblings may remain at camp if they show no symptoms.
- If they develop any symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea), they must also be picked up and follow the same return policy.

Prevention at Camp

We prevent spread by:

- Immediate cleaning and disinfecting of affected areas
- Frequent handwashing with soap and water (especially before meals and after bathroom use)
- Avoiding food sharing and group snacks during an outbreak
- Isolating any symptomatic individuals promptly

What Parents Can Do at Home

- Keep your child home if they show any signs of gastrointestinal illness
- Wait 48 hours after their last symptom before returning to camp
- Encourage good handwashing habits
- Let us know immediately if your child is diagnosed so we can notify other families in their group (without identifying your child)

Thank you for helping us keep camp safe and healthy for everyone.