

Etymology: norovirus [nor'-o-vi'rəs]

Genus of viruses that cause viral gastroenteritis. Noroviruses are named after the original strain, "Norwalk virus," which caused an outbreak of acute gastroenteritis among children at an elementary school in Norwalk, Ohio, in 1968. Numerous outbreaks of disease with similar symptoms have been reported since, and the etiologic agents were called "Norwalk-like viruses" or "small round-structured viruses." Noroviruses are transmitted primarily through the fecal-oral route and are highly contagious; as few as 10 viral particles may infect a person.

Sources: Mahy BWJ. A dictionary of virology. London: Academic Press; 2001;
www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/revb/gastro/norovirus-ga.htm;
www.medicinenet.com/norovirus_infection/article.htm