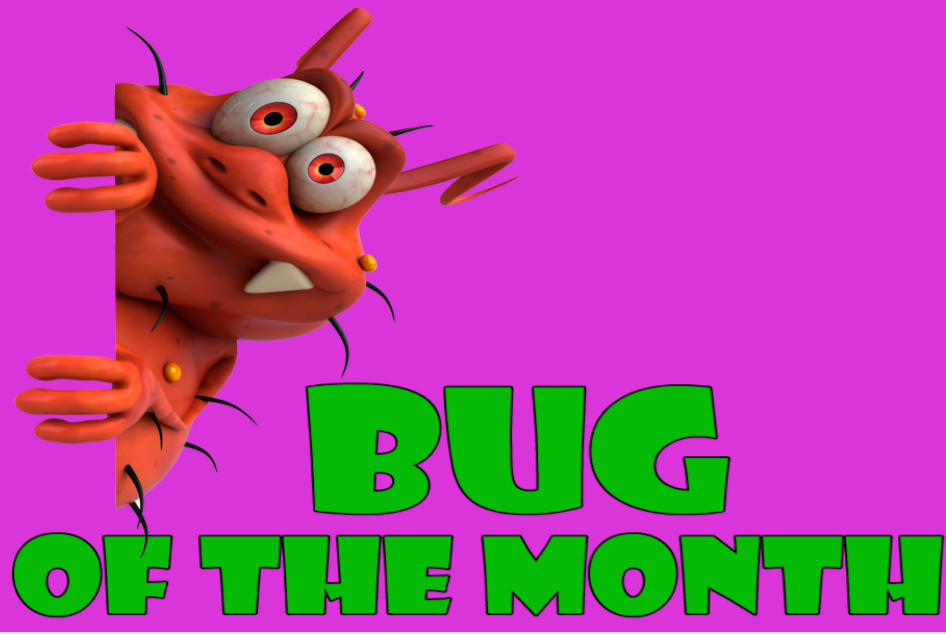


For Staff /Patient Education



Rotavirus

October 2016

What is it?

- Rotavirus is a contagious virus that can cause gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and intestines).
- Symptoms include severe watery diarrhea, often with vomiting, fever, and abdominal pain. Infants and young children are most likely to get rotavirus disease. They can become severely dehydrated and need to be hospitalized and can even die.
- Rotavirus disease is most common in infants and young children. However, older children and adults can also become infected with rotavirus. Once a person has been exposed to rotavirus, it takes about 2 days for the symptoms to appear.
- Children who get infected may have severe watery diarrhea, often with vomiting, fever, and abdominal pain. Vomiting and watery diarrhea can last from 3 to 8 days. Additional symptoms include loss of appetite and dehydration (loss of body fluids), which can be especially harmful for infants and young children.
- Symptoms of dehydration include: decrease in urination; dry mouth and throat; feeling dizzy when standing up.
- Adults who get rotavirus disease tend to have milder symptoms.
- Children, even those that are vaccinated, may develop rotavirus disease more than once. That is because neither natural infection with rotavirus nor rotavirus vaccination provides full immunity (protection) from future infections.
- Usually a person's first infection with rotavirus causes the most severe symptoms.

How is it spread?

- People who are infected with rotavirus shed rotavirus (passed from a person's body into the environment) in their feces (stool). They shed the virus most when they are sick and during the first 3 days after they recover from rotavirus disease.
- The virus spreads by the fecal-oral route; this means that the virus must be shed by an infected person and then enter a susceptible person's mouth to cause infection. Rotavirus can be spread by contaminated hands, objects (toys, surfaces), food, water.

Where is it found?


- The reservoir of rotavirus is the gastrointestinal tract and stool of infected humans.
- Although rotavirus infection occurs in many nonhuman mammals, transmission of animal rotaviruses to humans is believed to be rare and probably does not lead to clinical illness.
- Although immunodeficient persons may shed rotavirus for a prolonged period, a true carrier state has not been described.

Prevention and Control?

- A Rotavirus can spread easily. Good hygiene (handwashing) and cleanliness are important but are not enough to control the spread of the disease.
- Rotavirus vaccines are very effective in preventing rotavirus gastroenteritis and the accompanying diarrhea and other symptoms. CDC recommends routine vaccination of infants with either of the two available vaccines:
 - ✓ RotaTeq® (RV5), which is given in 3 doses at ages 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months; or
 - ✓ Rotarix® (RV1), which is given in 2 doses at ages 2 months and 4 months.
- There is no antiviral drug to treat rotavirus infection. Antibiotic drugs will not help because antibiotics fight against bacteria not viruses.
- People who are infected should be isolated in the healthcare facility and contact precautions are observed in addition to standard precautions.
- Ensure consistent environmental cleaning and disinfection and frequent removal of soiled diapers. Prolonged shedding may occur in both immunocompetent and immunocompromised children and the elderly.

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Source:

<http://www.cdc.gov/rotavirus/about/index.html>



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