

FACT SHEET

Norovirus RT-PCR

Test 6100

Test Description:

Norovirus (previously called Norwalk Virus) is the most common cause of acute gastroenteritis in the United States. Norovirus is also the most common cause of foodborne-disease of the leading causes of gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and intestines that causes vomiting and/or diarrhea).

Norovirus is highly contagious. It spreads through person-to-person contact and contaminated food, water, and surfaces. People can get norovirus illness throughout the year, but cases typically peak between December-February.

The best way to help prevent norovirus is to practice proper hand washing and general cleanliness.

Norovirus can be found in stool (feces) before symptoms occur and stay in the stool up to 2-3 weeks after symptoms. Most contagious when ill with the virus and the first few days after symptoms have subsided.

The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Laboratory performs a real time, reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) test for detection of the Norovirus in feces. Related viruses such as Sapovirus and Astroviruses are not detected by this assay.

Sensitivity: 95-98%

Specificity: 98-100%

Specimen Requirement:

Bulk liquid stool specimens collected during acute phase (48-72 hours of illness) in a plain sterile container and sealed in a separate leak proof bag.

Norovirus is highly contagious, use Universal Precautions when handling the specimen.

Stools are accepted up to 7-10 days after onset.

Specimens should be individually stored and transported at Refrigerated Temperature 4° C.

CPT : 87798



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