



BUNCOMBE COUNTY
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Camp Safety Guide

Have fun, stay safe and be healthy!

**A GUIDE TO SUMMER CAMP SAFETY
IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA**





THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN IS EVERYONE'S JOB!

Dear Parents and Camp Administrators:

Summer camps are a great opportunity for children and teens to spend time outdoors and participate in a variety of educational and recreational experiences.

To help make summer camp a safe and enjoyable experience, there are precautions that can be taken by parents, camp staff, and campers themselves. Summer camps in our region have written health policies and protocols. We encourage parents to ask questions and be informed of what those policies and protocols are before their child's arrival at summer camp.

This booklet, produced by Buncombe County Health and Human Services Public Health staff, provides information relevant to North Carolina, and in particular, Western North Carolina. Based on their experience and knowledge of the potential hazards that camp settings can present, the team has connected with camp staff, answered their questions, and provided them with friendly reminders about safety precautions. This guide reinforces critical public health information for staff and parents that, when applied, can provide a shield of protection that keeps campers healthy and safe from preventable communicable diseases.

Best wishes for a great summer!

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Buncombe County Medical Director

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GENERAL GUIDANCE For A Healthy Camp

INTAKE/SCREENING:

A parent/guardian confirms there is no illness, no medication has been given to suppress a fever, and the camp staff completes a visual health inspection.

HANDWASHING AND HYGIENE:

Practice frequent handwashing and advise children, families, and staff to avoid touching their eyes, nose, and mouth with their hands.

Provide visual aids reminding of proper hygiene procedures:

[cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html)

MITIGATION STRATEGIES TO CONSIDER:

- Distancing
- Cohorting
- Masking
- Limiting large indoor gatherings
- Sneeze + cough etiquette (cover your cough)
- Increase ventilation: open screened windows and doors, use fans
- Individual water bottles for campers in lieu of water fountains
- Strategically placed handwashing/sanitizer stations
- Flexible sick-time for staff

HOW TO ISOLATE AND REPORT SICK CAMPERS

- At day camps, sick campers or staff members must be isolated immediately at the camp's infirmary or holding area and arrangements made to send them home. Any camper and staff who are sent home should seek prompt medical attention.
- At overnight camps, sick campers or staff members must be isolated from other campers, in the infirmary or a location separate from healthy people.
- New arrivals should not be housed with sick or recovering people.

- Exclude sick persons from duties and activities until symptoms resolve, and/or permission is granted by the medical provider and/or health director.
- Restrictions from activities and isolation periods for sick individuals vary based on the type of illness. Consult your local health department for the appropriate period of time for isolation/quarantine or activity restrictions for sick individuals.
- During periods of sickness:
 - » Limit entry/exit from camp.
 - » Postpone or restrict activities involving visitors, including other camps.

REPORTING AND NOTIFICATION

Depending on the situation, the camp should be prepared to give the health department information they might need to control the spread of disease. This information may include:

- Onset of symptoms
- Immunization records
- Information about camp activities and interactions with other camps
- Information on possible food and water exposures

Camps are required to notify their local health department within 24 hours of illnesses spread through:

- Water
- Food
- Air
- Person-to-person contact
- More information [HERE - reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac/title 10a - health and human services/chapter 41 - epidemiology health/subchapter a/10a ncac 41a .0101.pdf](https://reports.oah.state.nc.us/ncac/title%2010a%20-%20health%20and%20human%20services/chapter%2041%20-%20epidemiology%20health/subchapter%20a/10a%20ncac%2041a%20.0101.pdf)

An outbreak is any disease in a community with numbers greater than normal.

Sometimes, a single case of a disease may be an outbreak.

Communicable diseases are not found regularly among summer campers. Therefore, **two (2)** or more cases are sufficient to alert the local health department.

Local and state health departments are available to consult on prevention and control of any case or outbreak of illness in a camp.

Notify parents of any illnesses and outbreaks. Please contact the Buncombe County Communicable Disease staff for assistance at **(828) 250-5109**.



PROTECT Against Tick Bites

TICK FACTS IN WNC

Did you know that tickborne illnesses infect a large number of people in North Carolina every year? While Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tickborne illness in the United States, the tickborne illness with the highest annual incidence rate (i.e., the number of new cases per year) in North Carolina is Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF; [cdc.gov/rmsf/stats](https://www.cdc.gov/rmsf/stats)).

Tickborne illnesses can infect people in all regions of NC at any time of the year. However, because more people are outside during the warmer months, the vast majority of tickborne illnesses occur in the months of June through September. It is important to be aware of these tiny travelers. They may be small, but the disease they carry is mighty!

PREVENTING TICK BITES

In general, you should avoid tick habitats including wooded, grassy, or bushy areas. If you can't avoid tick habitat, use repellent to reduce the risk of getting bitten. It can take as short as 4 hours for RMSF to infect a person, so it's critical to inspect yourself, those you care for, and any pets immediately after potential exposure. Complete information on reducing your chance of exposure to ticks can be found at [cdc.gov/ticks](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks).

Avoid Direct Contact with Ticks

Basic ways to avoid direct contact with ticks include avoiding wooded and busy areas with high grass and leaf litter; walking in the center of trails or paths; and wearing a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and socks. Tuck the shirt into the pants and the pants into the socks.

Repel Ticks with DEET or Permethrin

Use repellents that contain 20 to 30% DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) on exposed skin and clothing for protection that lasts up to several hours. Always follow product instructions. When applying this product, avoid hands, eyes, and mouth.

CAMPER TIP: Use products that contain permethrin on clothing. Treat clothing and gear, such as boots, pants, socks, and tents with products containing permethrin, following instructions on the product. It remains protective through several washings. Pre-treated clothing is available and may be protective for longer.

TICK INSPECTION AND REMOVAL

Bathe or shower as soon as possible after coming indoors (preferably within two hours) to wash off and more easily find ticks that might be on the body.

Conduct a full-body tick check using a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body upon return from the outdoors. Check for ticks under the arms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees, between the legs, around the waist, and in and around scalp.

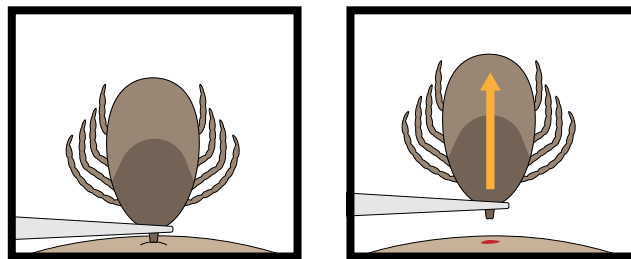
Tumble clothes in a dryer on high heat for an hour to kill any remaining unseen ticks.

CAMPER TIP: Examine gear and pets. Ticks can ride into the home on clothing and pets, then attach to a person later, so carefully examine pets, coats, and gear.

How To Remove A Tick

1. If a tick is attached to you, use clean, fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible. Do not put hot matches, nail polish, or petroleum jelly on the tick to try to make it pull away from the skin.
2. Pull the tick straight up and out. Don't twist or jerk the tick, this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and stay in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers if you can. If you cannot remove the mouth-parts easily, leave them alone and let the skin heal.

Removing a tick as soon as possible can greatly reduce your chances of getting a tickborne disease.






3. Do not crush the tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag or container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet.
4. Clean the bite area with rubbing alcohol, an iodine scrub, or soap and water. Wash your hands.
5. A small bump or redness at the site of the tick bite is common and goes away in a few days. This is not a sign that you have Lyme disease or any other tickborne illness.

Record the date of all tick bites and notify the camper's family/guardian of when and where the bite occurred. If symptoms develop within **30 days** of a tick bite, the person should follow-up with a healthcare provider immediately.

Early treatment with antibiotics following a tick bite can reduce the risk of developing severe tickborne illness.

COMMON TICKS AND TICKBORNE ILLNESSES

TICK	ILLNESS AND SYMPTOMS
<p data-bbox="186 281 456 310">American Dog Tick</p> 	<p data-bbox="506 281 1469 464">Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (RMSF): Onset of symptoms is 3 to 12 days after the bite of an infected tick. Illness typically begins with sudden onset of fever and headache. Other symptoms can include rash, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, muscle pain, loss of appetite, and swelling around the eyes and on the back of the hands.</p> <p data-bbox="506 478 1469 625">Rash is a common sign and usually develops within 2-4 days after the fever begins. Rash starts as small, flat, pink spots (that don't itch) on wrists, forearms, and ankles, then spreads to include the trunk and sometimes the palms of the hands and soles of the feet.</p> <p data-bbox="506 640 1469 709">RMSF can lead to heart, lung, or kidney failure, swelling of the brain, and/or death without treatment.</p>
<p data-bbox="217 728 423 758">Lone Star Tick</p> <p data-bbox="168 762 472 804">Photo by graham.snodgrass@us.army.mil Pl: tony.gutierrez@us.army.mil</p> 	<p data-bbox="506 728 1469 911">Ehrlichiosis: Onset of symptoms is within 1 to 2 weeks after the bite of an infected tick. Symptoms may include fever, chills, severe headache, muscle aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite, and confusion. A red splotchy or pinpoint rash can occur and is more common in children than adults.</p> <p data-bbox="506 926 1469 1108">Southern Tick-Associated Rash Illness (STARI): Onset of symptoms is usually within 7 days after tick bite. Symptoms may include fatigue, headache, fever, muscle and joint pains, and a red, expanding "bull's-eye" lesion around the site of the bite. The rash is similar to the rash of early Lyme disease.</p>
<p data-bbox="191 1127 451 1192">Black-Legged Tick (aka "Deer" tick)</p> <p data-bbox="240 1203 402 1224">Photo by Don Loarie</p> 	<p data-bbox="506 1127 1469 1234">Lyme Disease: Onset of symptoms is typically 3 to 30 days after the bite of an infected tick. Average onset of rash is 7 days after the bite.</p> <p data-bbox="506 1262 1469 1369">Early symptoms may include fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint pain, and swollen lymph nodes. A classic "bull's-eye" rash develops in 70 - 80% of infected persons at the site of the tick bite.</p> <p data-bbox="506 1396 1469 1547">Later signs and symptoms may include severe headaches, neck stiffness, additional "bull's-eye" rashes on other parts of the body, arthritis, neurological symptoms, and heart problems. Ehrlichiosis can also be spread by the Black-Legged Tick.</p>

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

CDC information on preventing tick bites: [cdc.gov/ticks](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks)



PROTECT Against Mosquito Bites

WNC MOSQUITO FACTS

Mosquitoes are serious business in WNC. Protecting yourself and your children against these pesky creatures is a smart move. Eliminating all standing water around your home, camp, and anywhere else that mosquitoes can breed will help reduce their numbers and keep you itch-free and healthy.

The illnesses most commonly transmitted by mosquitoes in North Carolina are West Nile Virus disease, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, and La Crosse Encephalitis.

La Crosse Encephalitis is unique in that over 75% of North Carolina's cases are reported from the southwestern portion of NC counties, primarily Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Swain, and Transylvania – prime camp settings!

In general, most cases of mosquito-borne illness show no or mild symptoms, but severe cases can occur. Illness usually begins with the sudden onset of headache, high fever, chills, and vomiting. The illness may become more serious and involve disorientation, seizures, coma, significant brain damage, or death. There is no specific cure for these mosquito-borne illnesses; treatment is limited to treating symptoms of the disease and may require hospitalization.

In North Carolina, the viruses that cause mosquito-borne illness occur naturally in wild animals, such as birds or mammals. They are spread from animal-to-animal by mosquito bites. If mosquito populations grow very large, there is an increased risk of an infected mosquito biting a person or domestic animal. Mosquito-borne illnesses are seen most often during the late summer or early fall, but they can occur whenever mosquitoes are active.

PREVENTING MOSQUITO BITES

Avoid Direct Contact with Mosquitoes

The best way to avoid becoming ill from a mosquito-borne virus is to prevent mosquito bites.

1. **Use repellent:** When outdoors, use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, or oil of lemon eucalyptus. Apply repellent on exposed skin as well as on clothing, as mosquitoes will bite through thin cloth.

CAMP TIP:

Permethrin is a repellent / insecticide that can be applied to clothing and will provide excellent protection through multiple washes. For best protection, continue to apply other repellent to exposed skin.

2. **Wear protective clothing:** Wear long sleeves, pants, and socks when weather permits.
3. **Avoid peak biting hours:** Avoid outdoor activities when mosquitoes are active.
4. **Install and repair screens:** Make sure that all window and door screens are secure and intact.
5. **Keep mosquitoes from laying eggs near you:** Mosquitoes can lay eggs even in small amounts of standing water. Get rid of mosquito breeding sites by emptying standing water from flowerpots, buckets, barrels, and tires. Replace the water in pet dishes and bird baths frequently. Drill holes in tire swings so water drains out. Empty wading pools and store on their side after use.

COMMON MOSQUITOBORNE ILLNESSES AND SYMPTOMS

ILLNESS	HOW IT SPREADS	SYMPTOMS
La Crosse Encephalitis (LACE)	LACE is the most frequently reported mosquitoborne illness in NC. The La Crosse virus appears to be maintained in small mammals (such as squirrels) and is transmitted by mosquito species that breed in tree-holes or small containers that hold water.	<p>Most people with La Crosse virus infection have no symptoms.</p> <p>If symptoms are present, they typically appear 5 to 15 days after the bite of an infected mosquito.</p> <p>Initial symptoms can include a fever that lasts 2 - 3 days, headache, nausea, vomiting, feeling tired, and being more inactive than usual.</p> <p>Severe illness occurs more frequently in children under the age of 16 years. Symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, disorientation, coma, seizures, and paralysis.</p>
West Nile Virus (WNV) Disease	West Nile virus is spread when a mosquito bites an infected bird and then that mosquito bites a person.	<p>Most people with WNV infection have no symptoms.</p> <p>About 1 in 5 people who are infected will have a fever plus other symptoms like headache, body aches, joint pains, vomiting, diarrhea, or rash. Most people will recover completely, but tiredness and weakness can last for weeks or months.</p> <p>Less than 1% of people who are infected will develop severe illness affecting the brain and/or the lining of the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms can include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, disorientation, coma, tremors, seizures, or paralysis.</p>

ILLNESS	HOW IT SPREADS	SYMPTOMS
Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)	<p>Eastern Equine Encephalitis virus is spread when a mosquito from a freshwater hardwood swamp bites an infected bird and then that mosquito bites a person.</p> <p>EEE is seen more often in coastal regions or in eastern Piedmont areas, in late summer or early fall.</p>	<p>Most people infected with EEE virus have no symptoms.</p> <p>If symptoms are present, they typically appear 4 to 10 days after the bite of an infected mosquito.</p> <p>EEE virus infection can cause two types of illness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Febrile illness typically includes fever, chills, body aches, and joint pain and lasts 1 to 2 weeks. Most people recover completely if there is no involvement of the brain or spinal cord. 2. Neurologic disease can include fever, headache, vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, behavioral changes, drowsiness, and coma. About 1/3 of all people with infection of the brain die, typically 2 to 10 days after symptoms start. Many people who recover have long-term physical or mental impairments.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

About insect repellent use and safety:

[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

[cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/about/prevent-bites.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ncezid/dvbd/about/prevent-bites.html)

About Repellent Protection - Find the Right Repellant for You:

cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect

CDC information on preventing mosquito bites:

[cdc.gov/mosquitoes/mosquitobites/prevent-mosquito-bites.html](https://www.cdc.gov/mosquitoes/mosquitobites/prevent-mosquito-bites.html)

Information on tick and mosquito borne diseases in NC:

[epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/diseases/vector.html](https://www.epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/diseases/vector.html)



PROTECT Against Rabies

RABIES FACTS

Rabies is a preventable viral disease of mammals most often transmitted through the bite or saliva of a rabid animal. In North Carolina, the disease most often occurs in wild animals, especially skunks, raccoons, bats, and foxes.

The rabies virus infects the central nervous system, ultimately causing disease in the brain and is nearly always fatal in humans. The early symptoms of rabies in people can include fever, headache, or general weakness or discomfort. These symptoms may last for days. As the disease progresses, symptoms may include anxiety, confusion, agitation, disorientation, abnormal behavior, hallucinations, fear of water, and an inability to sleep. Death usually occurs within days of the onset of these later symptoms.

What are the Symptoms in Animals?

A rabid animal may show some (or none) of these symptoms:

- Unusually aggressive behavior (attacking, biting)
- Increased drooling
- Stumbling or falling
- Refusing to eat
- Moving slowly or appearing paralyzed
- Wild animal may exhibit no fear of people

PREVENTING RABIES

Protect yourself and campers from wild or rabid animal bites:

- **Keep rabies vaccinations up-to-date for any domesticated animals (cats, ferrets, dogs, or horses).** If your animal's vaccinations have expired or you cannot readily locate proof of current rabies vaccinations, get them to a veterinarian and have them vaccinated immediately. There are low-cost rabies vaccination clinics for cats and dogs throughout the year. Reach out to your local animal shelter for more information.

- **Stay away from wild animals and any animal you don't know.** Don't try to feed, touch, or play with a wild animal.
- **Don't allow pets to run at large.**
- **Secure garbage in containers and take trash containers out the morning of pick up, not the night before.** Trash or food left outside can attract wild animals that may be carrying rabies. Campers should take precautions with food while outdoors, especially overnight.
- **Secure crawl spaces under sheds, porches, decks, and homes that could house rabid animals.**
- **Call animal control to have any sick, injured, or aggressive wild animal removed.** Animal control does not remove healthy stray or wild animals. See contact information below.

PROTECT FROM BAT BITES

Since most human cases of rabies are linked to bat bites, it is important to take precautions to protect yourself while you sleep.

1. **Avoid contact with bats.** If you find a bat during daylight hours, it is most likely unhealthy and should not be touched.
2. **Seal living spaces from bats.** Do not sleep in a home, cabin, tent, shelter or other lodging facility if bats have access to the living space.
3. **If you find a bat inside, close it off in a room.** If you awaken to find a bat in your room, tent, or cabin, close it off in a room. Do not release the bat so it can be safely captured by professionals and tested for rabies. Do not try to capture the bat yourself. If the bat is not caught, it cannot be tested for rabies, which means that the people who were exposed to the bat may have to receive injections of medication and vaccines to prevent rabies (post-exposure prophylaxis).
4. **Call Animal Control.** Once you have secured the bat inside a room, immediately call your local Animal Control for assistance, then seek medical attention immediately. Never handle a bat or any dead animal with your bare hands. If a bat is found in a room with a person who is sleeping or with an infant or young child who are awake, these people may have been bitten and need to seek medical attention.

Bites from bats are so small that they can be difficult to notice.

Follow these steps if you have been bitten by an animal:

1. Immediately wash the wound with soap and running water for 20 minutes and see a health-care provider for medical attention. If you have not had a tetanus vaccine in the last 5 years, you will need a tetanus booster.
2. Contact Animal Control if you or your pet is bitten. Animal Control will assist with confining a domesticated animal for observation and/or capturing and testing a wild animal for rabies. The results of this confinement or testing will determine if you need to begin post-exposure prophylaxis.

Animal Control Phone Numbers:

- **Asheville City limits:** Asheville Police (828) 252-1110
- **Buncombe County:** Buncombe County Sheriff's Office (828) 250-6670.
- **Other Municipalities:** Biltmore Forest, Black Mountain, Montreat, Weaverville, or Woodfin, call Buncombe County Sheriff's Office (828) 250-6670
- For questions about rabies exposure and treatment, call 24/7 Buncombe County Communicable Disease line **(828) 250-5109**.



PROTECT Against Dangerous Disease

GET IMMUNIZED! IMMUNIZATIONS WORK!

We all have a part to play in the shield of protection against dangerous diseases. Parts of WNC are under-immunized, leaving our region at risk for disease outbreaks.

It is worth noting that children come from all over the United States and internationally to summer camps in our region.

When your child is immunized, this helps to build a shield of protection around your child and their fellow campers. This immunity helps to protect those children who cannot be immunized for a variety of medical reasons. **It is critical that campers and staff are up-to-date on their immunizations to help protect everyone.**

TIPS FOR CAMP ADMINISTRATORS

Know each camper and staff member's immunization status. Encourage or require campers or employees to be up-to-date with their vaccines before programming starts.

Request a copy of immunization records (including month and year for each type of immunization) for each camper and staff member. This is particularly important when a vaccine-preventable illness occurs.

- Public health departments may require mandatory isolation or quarantine in the event of a communicable disease outbreak, depending on the situation.
- For questions about vaccine-preventable diseases, contact the 24/7 Buncombe County Communicable Disease line **(828) 250-5109**.

PARENT TIP: Remember, your child will be in a communal setting at camp. If you have questions about immunizations for your child, please see your healthcare provider and get them vaccinated and up to date.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED IMMUNIZATIONS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Required Immunizations

- Diphtheria
- Hepatitis B
- Measles

- Meningococcal (one dose by age 12 years or entry into 7th grade, and a booster dose by age 17 years or 12th grade entry)
- Mumps
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Polio
- Rubella
- Tetanus
- Varicella (chickenpox)

Recommended Immunizations

The CDC also recommends children and/or adolescents be vaccinated against the following diseases:

- Hepatitis A
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Influenza
- COVID-19

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT IMMUNIZATIONS, VISIT:

Buncombe County: [buncombecounty.org/immunize](https://www.buncombecounty.org/immunize)

NC Department of Health and Human Services: immunize.nc.gov

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): cdc.gov/vaccines

Current COVID-19 guidance:

cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html

Immunize.org: immunize.org

Vaccineinformation.org: vaccineinformation.org

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia:

chop.edu/conditions-diseases/childhood-immunizations



PROTECT Against Common Diseases

NOROVIRUS - THE STOMACH BUG

Norovirus is a highly contagious virus, commonly referred to as “the stomach bug.” Norovirus infection causes gastroenteritis (inflammation of the stomach and intestines). This leads to diarrhea, vomiting, and stomach pain.

Norovirus illness is often called by other names, such as food poisoning and stomach flu. Noroviruses can cause food poisoning, as can other germs and chemicals. Norovirus illness is not related to the flu (influenza). Though they share some of the same symptoms, the flu is a respiratory illness caused by influenza virus.

Anyone Can Get Norovirus Illness

- Norovirus is the most common cause of acute gastroenteritis in the U.S.
- Each year, norovirus causes 19 to 21 million cases of acute gastroenteritis in the U.S.
- There are many types of noroviruses and you can get it more than once.

Norovirus Illness Can Be Serious

- Norovirus illness can make you feel extremely sick with diarrhea and vomiting many times a day.
- Some people may get severely dehydrated, especially young children, the elderly, and people with other medical conditions.
- Each year, norovirus causes 56,000 to 71,000 hospitalizations and 570 to 800 deaths, mostly in young children and the elderly.

Norovirus Spreads Very Easily and Quickly

- It only takes a very small amount of norovirus particles to make you sick.
- People with norovirus illness shed billions of virus particles in their stool and vomit. This can easily infect others.
- You are contagious from the moment you begin feeling sick and for the first few days after you recover.
- Norovirus can stay on objects and surfaces and still infect people for days or weeks.
- Norovirus can survive some disinfectants, making it hard to get rid of.

Norovirus Can Spread in Many Ways

Norovirus can spread to others through direct contact with an infected person, eating food or drinking liquids that are contaminated with norovirus, touching objects that have norovirus on them and then putting your fingers in your mouth, or sharing utensils or cups with people who are infected with norovirus.

There's No Vaccine or Medication to Prevent a Norovirus Infection

Antibiotics will not help with norovirus illness because antibiotics do not work on viruses.

When you have norovirus illness, drink plenty of liquids to replace fluid loss and prevent dehydration.

TIPS TO PREVENT NOROVIRUS FROM SPREADING

Practice Proper Hand Hygiene

Always wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water after using the toilet, and before eating, preparing, or handling food.

Food Preparation

Carefully wash fruits and vegetables before preparing and eating them. Cook oysters and other shellfish thoroughly before eating them.

Be aware that noroviruses are relatively resistant. They can survive temperatures as high as 140°F and quick steaming processes.

Keep sick people out of areas where food is being handled and prepared for at least 48 hours after their symptoms stop.

Food that might be contaminated with norovirus should be thrown out.

Activity Restrictions

Prevent campers from swimming while sick and for at least 1 week after their symptoms stop. Norovirus can live in water for several months or even years.

Clean and Disinfect Contaminated Surfaces

After throwing up or having diarrhea, immediately clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces.

- Use chlorine bleach solution with a 1:10 bleach and water mixture (1 part bleach, 10 parts water) or other disinfectant registered as effective against norovirus by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Leave the disinfectant on the area for at least 5 minutes.
- [epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-g-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-norovirus-feline](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-g-antimicrobial-products-registered-epa-claims-against-norovirus-feline)

Visit CDC's norovirus website at [cdc.gov/norovirus](https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus) and [cdc.gov/norovirus/infographics/healthy-camping-factsheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/infographics/healthy-camping-factsheet.html) for more information.

NOTE: Soap and water are still the best defense against norovirus.

Alcohol-based hand sanitizers do not kill norovirus and should only be used when soap and water are unavailable.

MRSA (METHICILLIN-RESISTANT STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS)

What is MRSA?

MRSA is methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, a potentially dangerous type of staph bacteria that is resistant to certain antibiotics and may cause skin and other infections. As with all regular staph infections, recognizing the signs and receiving treatment for MRSA skin infections in the early stages reduces the chances of the infection becoming severe. MRSA is spread by:

- Having direct contact with another person's infection
- Sharing personal items, such as towels or razors, that have touched infected skin
- Touching surfaces or items, such as used bandages, that are contaminated with MRSA

What Are the Signs and the Symptoms?

Most staph skin infections, including MRSA, appear as a bump or infected area on the skin (boil), that may worsen over time. The area may be:

- Red
- Swollen
- Painful
- Warm to the touch
- Full of pus or other drainage
- Accompanied by a fever

What If I Suspect a MRSA Skin Infection?

Cover the area with a bandage and contact a healthcare professional. It is especially important to contact a healthcare professional if signs and symptoms of a MRSA skin infection are accompanied by a fever.

How Are MRSA Skin Infections Treated?

Treatment for MRSA skin infections may include having a healthcare professional drain the infection and, in some cases, prescribe an antibiotic. **Do not attempt to drain the infection yourself - doing so could worsen the infection or spread it to others.** If you are given an antibiotic, be sure to take all of the doses (even if the infection is getting better).

How To Protect Campers From MRSA Skin Infections

- Know the signs of MRSA skin infections and seek healthcare evaluation early.
- Keep all cuts and scrapes clean and covered until healed.
- Encourage good hygiene and wash hands regularly.
- Showering immediately after activities where you have direct skin contact with people or shared surfaces, such as after exercising in a weight room.
- Using barriers like a towel or clothing between your skin and shared surfaces.
- Discourage sharing of personal items such as towels and razors.
- Clean and disinfect contaminated surfaces.

Which Disinfectants Should I Use Against MRSA?

Disinfectants effective against *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph) are most likely also effective against MRSA. These products are readily available from grocery stores and other retail stores. Check the disinfectant's label for a list of germs that the product can kill.

NOTE: Use disinfectants that are registered by the EPA (check for EPA registration number on the product's label to confirm that it is registered). -

[epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-h-registered-antimicrobial-products-label-claims-against-methicillin](https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-h-registered-antimicrobial-products-label-claims-against-methicillin)



PROTECT With Simple Prevention Steps

CLEANERS, SANITIZERS, AND DISINFECTANTS

Cleaners or detergents are products that are used to remove soil, dirt, dust, organic matter, and germs (like bacteria, viruses, and fungi). Cleaners or detergents work by washing the surface to lift dirt and germs so they can be rinsed away with water. The same thing happens when you wash your hands with soap and water or when you wash dishes. Rinsing is an important part of the cleaning process. These products are used for routine cleaning of surfaces.

Sanitizers are used to reduce germs from surfaces but not totally get rid of them. Sanitizers reduce the germs from surfaces to levels that are considered safe. Hand sanitizer is a common example.

Disinfectants are chemical products that destroy or inactivate germs and prevent them from growing. Disinfectants have no effect on dirt, soil, or dust. Disinfectants are regulated by the EPA. You should use a disinfectant after cleaning surfaces that have visible blood, drainage or other bodily fluid.

How Should Cleaners and Disinfectants Be Used?

Read the label first. Each cleaner and disinfectant has instructions on the label that tell you important facts.

- How to apply the product to a surface
- How long you need to leave it on the surface to be effective (contact time)
- If the surface needs to be cleaned first and rinsed after using
- If the disinfectant is safe for the surface
- Whether the product requires dilution with water before use
- Precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves or aprons or making sure you have good ventilation during application
- Environmental cleaners and disinfectants should not be used to treat infections.

Surfaces to Clean

- Use a targeted approach of cleaning frequently touched surfaces and any surfaces that have been in contact with uncovered wounds, cuts, or boils.

- Focus on surfaces that touch people's bare skin (like tables, chairs, gym equipment, helmets and protective gear, toilet seats). Many items such as computer keyboards or handheld electronic devices may be difficult to clean or disinfect or they could be damaged if they became wet. If these items are touched by many people during the day, a cleanable cover/skin could be used on the item to allow for cleaning while protecting the item. Always check to see if the manufacturer has instructions for cleaning.

Laundry

- Wash laundry thoroughly.
- Routine laundry procedures, detergents, and laundry additives will help make clothes, towels, and linens safe to wear or touch.
- For any item contaminated with body fluids, immediately launder. Wear rubber or disposable gloves while handling soiled items and wash your hands afterwards.
- Handle soiled items carefully without agitating them. Consider transporting these items to laundry facilities in a plastic trash bag.
- Items may be laundered separately, but this is not absolutely necessary.
- Wash the items with detergent at the maximum available cycle length, then machine dry them at the highest heat setting.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Below are posters you can download and display in visible areas in your facilities. Click on each image to download the graphic.



[epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/ticks/tick_poster_11x17.pdf](https://www.epi.publichealth.nc.gov/cd/ticks/tick_poster_11x17.pdf)



[cdc.gov/norovirus/in-fographics/infographic-healthy-camping-norovirus-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/norovirus/in-fographics/infographic-healthy-camping-norovirus-508.pdf)



[cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc_cough.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/protect/cdc_cough.pdf)



[cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html)

HELPFUL CONTACTS

Questions, concerns, or to report communicable disease in
Buncombe County:

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE:

(828) 250-5109

BUNCOMBE COUNTY IMMUNIZATION CLINIC:

(828) 250-5096

BUNCOMBE COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH:

(828) 250-5016

ANIMAL CONTROL - BUNCOMBE COUNTY:

(828) 250-6670

ANIMAL CONTROL - CITY OF ASHEVILLE:

(828) 252-1110

WILDLIFE DAMAGE CONTROL OFFICER:

ncwildlife.org/problem-wildlife/wildlife-control



buncombecounty.org/hhs
(828) 250-5000



BUNCOMBE COUNTY
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES