

Keep the Norovirus Curve Low With Continued Focus on Disinfection of High-Touch Surfaces in Restaurants

After the first year of the pandemic (2019-2020), the controls used to prevent SARS-CoV-2, including a focus on disinfection of high-touch surfaces, were likely working to reduce norovirus outbreaks. **CDC data from 2019-2020 shows a dramatic drop in norovirus outbreaks compared to previous years.**

Did You Know?

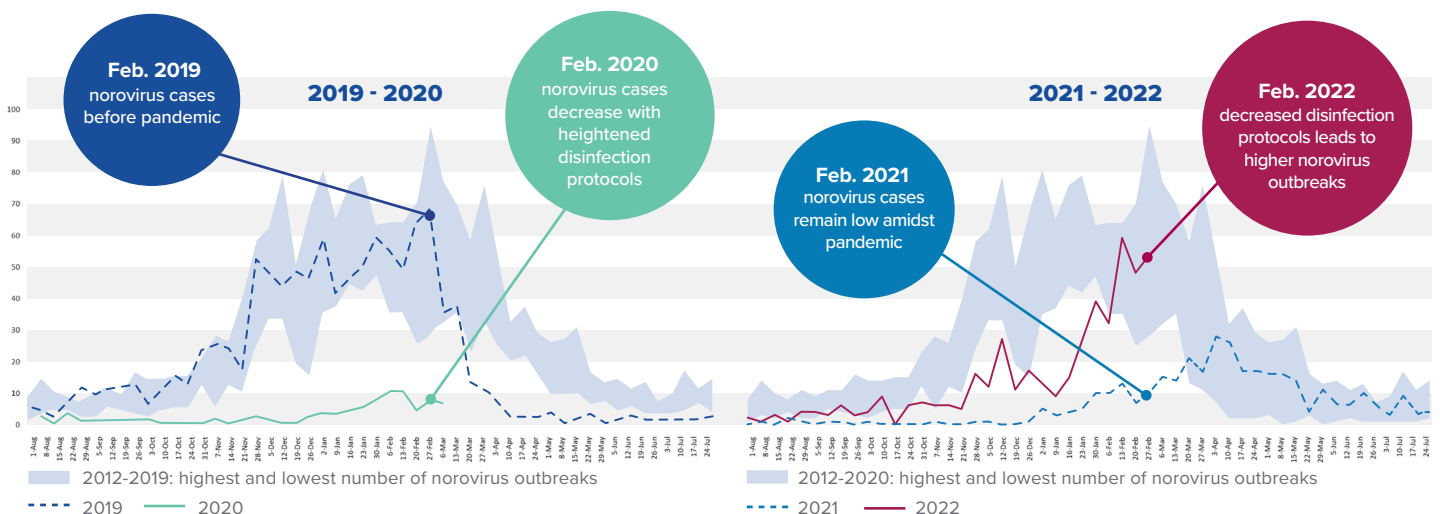


Approximately 50% of all restaurant associated foodborne disease outbreaks are caused by norovirus annually in the US.

A large majority of foodborne illnesses are due to the cross contamination of high touch surfaces to food from hands. The FDA has reported that norovirus is significantly transmitted from employees to high-touch surfaces (usually starting in restrooms) to foods.

Now in 2022, norovirus outbreaks are inching up again, likely related to a de-emphasis on disinfection of high-touch surfaces. In addition to other variables.

We may be witnessing a paradigm shift to improved sanitation, but restaurants need to continue the sanitation of high-touch surfaces. While some argue it is only for “hygienic theater,” in many businesses that serve the public like restaurants, this is NOT accurate in the context of prevention of foodborne pathogens in foodservice environments.



Restaurants Need to Continue to Use Preventative Controls in Order to Reduce Foodborne Illnesses and Outbreaks

TO PREVENT NOROVIRUS POST-PANDEMIC:



SAFETY

Ensure use of a Food Safety Management System (FSMS).

- Defined SOPs
- Defined training
- Defined monitoring of controls



PERSONAL HYGIENE

Ensure personal hygiene controls are in place at all times.

- Hand washing and proper hand sanitizer use
- Proper use of PPE (face coverings and mask use)
- Proper use of gloves



FOODSERVICE ENVIRONMENT

Ensure contamination controls in the foodservice environment to reduce the risk of virus transmission to both employees and food.

- Sanitize and disinfect surfaces with a product that quickly kills norovirus like PURELL® Foodservice Surface Sanitizer.



EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

Ensure employee wellness checks (symptoms screening) at each shift under your Health Policy. All employees should be aware of this policy.



PROTECTION

Ensure a Certified Food Protection Manager (CFPM) as the PIC at all shifts to manage the FSMS.



COVID19 GUIDELINES

Continue to practice necessary pandemic related protocols as needed.

If you are interested in participating in a norovirus prevention and control pilot program with PURELL® Foodservice Surface Sanitizing Products, contact

Hal King, PhD., Managing Partner at Active Food Safety.

www.activefoodsafety.com/contact-us.