

The Public Health Agency (PHA) would remind the public of the need to maintain good hand hygiene during major events. This will help to reduce the risk of picking up or spreading of viruses such as norovirus, (vomiting bug).



The PHA recommends simple, practical steps to minimise the risk of illness and infection including:

- Always maintain good personal hygiene. Wash your hands frequently, especially after visits to the toilet, and before preparing or eating food.
- Use a tissue to cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, throw the tissue in the bin and wash your hands as soon as you can.
- Encourage children to wash their hands frequently and use tissues as well.
- People with vomiting or diarrhoea symptoms should not prepare food.
- Use an anti-bacterial gel or wipe when hand washing facilities are not available.

Dr Gerry Waldron, Acting Assistant Director of Public Health (Health Protection), PHA, said: “Clean hands are vital in controlling the spread of viruses and other infections. Anti-bacterial gels and wipes are not a substitute for washing hands with soap and water as gels/wipes may not be able to remove contamination in the way that running water can. However they may be useful if handwashing facilities are not available.”

Further information on hand hygiene and washing techniques are available in an information leaflet which can be accessed on the PHA website:

<http://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/hand-hygiene>

For further information on Norovirus see attachment below.

[Return to major events page](#)

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