MANY TO BE STRUCK DOWN THIS WINTER

Experts predict winter vomiting bug outbreak

The winter vomiting bug is set to explode in Sweden, according to some health experts. After relatively few cases of the highly contagious norovirus last winter, the nasty bug, which causes projectile vomiting and diarrhoea, is expected to return with a vengeance this season.

"I think it will explode now the cold is coming," norovirus expert and food hygienist Marie-Louise Danielsson-Tham at the Grythyttne Institute in Örebro told tabloid Aftonbladet.

Danielsson-Tham believes that because last year was quieter than normal, this year's outbreak will be more widespread. She said: "I believe that there will be a lot (of cases) this year. You see one (mass outbreak) at an interval of every two-years. We expect an explosion this year, yes."

Thousands of people in Sweden could become ill from the norovirus, which fortunately only stays in the body for a maximum of two days.

The vomiting bug can actually flare up at any time of the year but is more predominant in the winter when cold weather forces people indoors.

According to the Swedish Institute for Communicable Disease Control, there were 72,270 registered cases of norovirus in 2012.

A small percentage of the Swedish population carry a gene which makes them immune to infection.

"Some people are simply resistant, and it has to do with our blood group antigens, which we are born with," Lars-Magnus Andersson, head doctor in infection at Sahlgrenska University Hospital in Gothenburg, told tabloid Expressen.