

GASTROENTERITIS

Current Anticipatory guidance Recommendations and Education (CARE)

What is a Gastroenteritis?

- Gastroenteritis is an infection of the gastrointestinal system (stomach and bowels) that causes diarrhea and vomiting.
- Sometime kids will have more vomiting, and some will have more diarrhea
- Gastroenteritis is similar to a stomach bug with food poisoning but usually is caused by a **Virus** not food
- There are no medications to get rid of the virus and this needs to run it's course but there are things you can do to help

What should I expect?

- Some kids have abdominal (belly) discomfort and this is often around the time they vomit
- Vomiting and diarrhea may continue for around a week to 10 days
- Fevers can last for about 3 to 4 days
- Many children develop headaches when they are sick
- Diarrhea can cause diaper rash, and even a small amount of bleeding from irritation.

What can I do for my child?

- Sometimes medication can help with the vomiting especially in older children
- Medications for diarrhea - even over-the-counter medications - may make symptoms worse and do not help and are not recommended.
- Antibiotics may also make things worse if the cause of the diarrhea is not known
- Try to keep the child **hydrated** by offering small amounts of clear fluids frequently
 - Infants <6months (Pedialyte, oral rehydration solution, or breast milk; NO Plain WATER)
 - Offer 1/4-1/2 oz every 15-30 minutes.
 - If no vomiting, increase slowly to normal amount.

*Did you know?

TYLENOL = ACETAMINOPHEN
MOTRIN, ADVIL = IBUPROFEN

Many medications have more than one name because of generic and brand name types.
Generic and brand types work the same
Ibuprofen/Motrin may only be given to children over 6 months

- If no vomiting for 8 hours, try small amount (1/2 oz) of formula & slowly increase to normal amount).
- Infants > 6 months & older children (Pediatlyte, Oral rehydration solution, breast milk, Gatorade; NO MILK Products)
 - Offer ½-1 oz every 30 minutes.
 - If no vomiting, increase slowly to normal amount.
 - If no vomiting for 8 hours, try bland food (crackers, toast, broth, rice, bread).
 - If no vomiting for 24 hours, OK to start regular diet.
 - Avoid milk products for 2-3 days after last episode of vomiting.

- Feed normally if they are having diarrhea only.

- Watch how often and how much your child has wet diapers or pees. They will pee less , but should go 3-4 times per day. Vomiting may seem worse but diarrhea leads to more dehydration

- Watch how often your child is peeing to ensure they are staying hydrated. This may be a little less than normal but if there are no diapers for 6 - 8 hours or no peeing, your child may need to get checked out

- Change diapers frequently to avoid diaper rash.

Did you know?

ANTIBIOTICS DON'T TREAT VIRAL INFECTIONS.

Overuse of antibiotics can make future bacteria infections more difficult to treat.

You may also leave children out of their diapers for a short period to allow some drying.

- This may be spread from person to person so **good hand washing and cleaning home surfaces** is very important.
- Avoid daycare or other children around until 24 hours without diarrhea or vomiting.
- When your child is feeling better you can start foods such as bananas, rice, apple sauce and crackers and continue with electrolyte solutions.
- Dairy foods such as milk and cheese or heavy and fried foods may be hard on the stomach to start

How long with my child be sick for?

- Diarrhea and vomiting may take a while to get better sometimes up to 7 to 10 days
- Fevers should go away in about 3 to 4 days

When should I get immediate attention?

- All kids should **follow up with their regular doctors** a few days after being in the Emergency Department
- If your child has constant or severe pain in their belly
- Signs of dehydration
 - Fussy behavior that cannot be calmed
 - Unable to drink anything and vomits all fluids
 - No peeing or urination in 8 -10 hours or less than 2 wet diapers per day
 - Worsening sleepiness, sunken eyes, no tears when crying
- If vomiting is green in a baby
- If your child has trouble breathing
- If your child has bloody vomit or diarrhea