



## VOMITING AND DEHYDRATION

Vomiting and diarrhea in infant and children are usually signs of an illness called *gastroenteritis*. This is usually caused by a virus and occasionally by bacteria or parasites. The main danger of gastroenteritis is **dehydration**. Signs of dehydration are dry wrinkly skin, dry mouth (no saliva), sunken soft spot, and decreased activity or lethargy.

### Diet for gastroenteritis

**IF YOUR CHILD IS A BABY** and is vomiting:

Stop formula, milk and solid feeds. Breast feeding can be continued but feed frequently and smaller amounts if your child continues to vomit stop breast feeding and encourage hydration with small sips of an oral rehydration solution.

**IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT A BABY** and is vomiting

Stop solids and milk and encourage hydration with small sips of an oral rehydration solution. The **best fluid** to have is an electrolyte solution such as **Pedialyte** so both the water and salts are replaced. Other fluids that can be used are **Gatorade/Propel**, especially in children older than a year.

Start with small amounts, 1/2 ounce every 5-10 minutes. If your child refuses to drink offer it by spoon or dropper. If your child is keeping down small amounts you can increase the amount your child is taking slowly.

If your child is drinking the clear fluid without throwing up for more than 6-8 hours, you can advance the diet. **Infants** can be switched to a lactose free formula or soy-based formula. Try small amounts at a time. If full strength formula is not tolerated, try half strength formula by diluting it with water i.e. 1 ounce full strength formula with 1 ounce water.

For an **older infant** who can take solids and whose vomiting has ceased, you can give **rice cereal** mixed with Pedialyte, apple sauce, or bananas, as well as the lactose-free or soy-

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based formula until the diarrhea has resolved. The diarrhea may persist for some time, if it lasts more than one week we need to get *stool cultures*

**Children over one year** may start on the following diet of rice, pasta, cereals, breads, Jello, ripe bananas, grated apples or apple sauce, low salt clear soups with noodles, plain proteins such as eggs, chicken and meats and vegetables.

Avoid milk, dairy products, fruit juices. Clear liquids such as Pedialyte are preferred to replace losses, but if solids are tolerated, water maybe consumed.

For older children your doctor may prescribe an anti-nausea medication.

## **Diarrhea**

To decrease the duration of Diarrhea you can try a probiotic to restore the normal flora to the bowel; you can use Florastor, Culturelle, Align, VSL 3 or Florajen.

For chronic diarrhea you should make an appointment to evaluate the cause and formulate a treatment plan.

## **When you should call us**

- If your child has **signs of dehydration** such as **DRY EYES, NO TEARS, MOUTH DRY, NO SALIVA, SOFT SPOT IS SUNKEN, NO URINE OUTPUT FOR 6-8 HOURS, DECREASED ACTIVITY, LETHARGY.**
- If your child **refuses to take any liquids** and continues to vomit.

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