



DIARRHEA

Diarrhea is defined as the sudden increase in watery stools. It is usually caused by a viral infection of the intestines called gastroenteritis. Diarrhea may be present with a combination of symptoms that include vomiting, fever, and generalized abdominal cramping. Diarrhea may last from several days to a week and may be most severe in the first 24-48 hours. Treatment is focused on supportive care and adequate hydration.

Remember breastfed babies normally have frequent loose stools. Change in color or odor may be normal. It is not diarrhea unless it contains blood, abruptly increases in number, or has no substance – is all water.

Treatment

Breast fed infants:

- ❖ Provide breast milk on demand, this may be more frequently than usual.

Formula Fed infants:

- ❖ Avoid cow's milk-based formula (i.e Enfamil Lipil, Similac Advance, Nestle Good Start) until normal stools resume.
- ❖ Soy based (i.e. Prosobee, Isomil) or Lactose free formulas are OK.
- ❖ Offer oral rehydration solutions (Pedialyte) or other clear fluids (sugar water/tea).

Older children:

- ❖ Avoid dairy and fruit juices because they may exacerbate the loose stools.
- ❖ Continue with clear liquids such as Pedialyte, Gatorade, broths, or chamomile tea.
- ❖ If your child feels like eating, start with the BRAT diet. This includes Bread, Rice, Applesauce, & Toast.
- ❖ It is OK if your child does not eat well as long as they are staying well hydrated.

Call our office if:

- ❖ No urine for over 8 hours
- ❖ Any blood in the stool
- ❖ Fever for more than 72 hours
- ❖ Localized abdominal pain (generalized cramping may be normal)



Pediatric Advisor 2006.4; Copyright © 2006 McKesson Corporation and/or one of its subsidiaries. All Rights Reserved. Written by B.D. Schmitt, M.D., author of "Your Child's Health," Bantam Books. This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis, or treatment by a healthcare professional.



Westchester Commons

15400 WC Commons Way
Midlothian, VA 23113-7320
Tel: (804) 549-5405
Fax: (804) 379-8162

Old Jahnke Road

7023 Old Jahnke Road
Richmond, VA 23225-4126
Tel: (804) 320-1353
Fax: (804) 320-6636

Harbour Pointe

6510 Harbour View Court, Suite 100
Midlothian, VA 23112-6559
Tel: (804) 739-8166
Fax: (804) 639-6614