



Vomiting and Diarrhea, Child

Vomiting (throwing up) and diarrhea (watery stools) are symptom of problems with the stomach and intestines. The main risk of repeated vomiting and diarrhea is the body does not get as much water and fluids as it needs (dehydration). Dehydration occurs if your child:

- Loses too much fluid from vomiting or diarrhea.
- Is unable to replace the fluids lost with vomiting or diarrhea.

The main goal is to prevent dehydration.

CAUSES

There are many reasons for vomiting and diarrhea in children. One common cause is a virus (type of germ) in the stomach and intestines (viral gastroenteritis). There may be a fever. Your child may cry frequently, be less active than normal, and act as though something hurts. Your child's body will get rid of the virus in a week to 10 days.

Other causes of vomiting and diarrhea include:

- Head injury.
- Infection in other parts of the body.
- Side effect of medicine.
- Poisoning.
- Intestinal blockage.
- Bacterial infections of the stomach.
- Food poisoning.
- Parasitic infections of the intestine.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Prevent the spread of infection by washing hands especially:
 - * After changing diapers.
 - * After holding or caring for a sick child.
 - * Before eating.
- Give your baby a normal diet, unless told otherwise by your child's healthcare provider.
- It is common for a baby to eat poorly after problems with vomiting. Do not force your child to eat.

ORAL REHYDRATION SOLUTIONS (ORS)

- Pedialyte® or Gastrolyte® are the only fluids you should use (other than breastmilk) to replace fluids lost through vomiting and diarrhea. These are available at most drug stores and covered through the Ontario Drug Benefit plan for families receiving social assistance.
- Available in different flavours, taste better cold and can be made into popsicles. Powder form (must be mixed with water as directed), ready-made popsicles and freezies are available.

Do not give Kool Aid, pop, fruit juice, broth, rice water, Jell-O, tea, plain water.

This general advice cannot cover all possible problems. If there is concern, please contact your physician, healthcare provider or the Emergency Department without delay.



Vomiting and Diarrhea, Child

VOMITING WITH OR WITHOUT DIARRHEA

If you are breastfeeding:

- Continue to breastfeed but for less time and more often. If your baby feeds every 3 hours for 10 minutes on each side, try 5 min. a side every 1 ½ hours.
- If your child vomits again, switch to ORS by spoon for a few hours. Give 1 tablespoon (15 mls) of ORS every 10 minutes.
- If there is no further vomiting for 4 hours return to your normal feeding schedule.

If not breastfeeding:

- Give 1 tablespoon (15mls) of ORS every 10 minutes by spoon.
- If there is not further vomiting for 4 hours, slowly begin to give your child their usual diet (like formula or milk). Start with small amounts more often.

DIARRHEA WITHOUT VOMITING

If you are breastfeeding:

- Keep breastfeeding as usual – often enough to keep up with fluid lost through diarrhea.
- If eating other foods, slowly begin to give their usual diet, smaller amounts more often.

If not breastfeeding:

- Slowly begin to give their usual diet, smaller amounts more often.
- Give ORS to replace fluids lost through diarrhea.

Keep giving ORS until diarrhea stops – this may take up to 10 days.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF YOUR CHILD:

- Is 3 months old or younger with a fever (38°C or 100.4°F rectally) or higher, or diarrhea for more than 2 days (48 hours)
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 38.5°C (101.5°F) or higher for more than 2 days.
- Has bloody or black stool (poop).
- Vomits blood or green bile.
- Still has diarrhea after 10 days.
- Has less than 4 wet diapers in 24 hours for babies under 2 years.
- Has less urine (pee) or no urine for 8 hours for a child over 2 years.
- Has abdominal pain that won't go away or is getting worse.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOUR CHILD HAS:

- Decreased alertness.
- Sunken eyes or soft spot on the head is sunken.
- Dry mouth and tongue.
- No tears when crying.
- Rapid breathing or pulse.
- Weakness or limpness, or very sleepy and hard to wake up.
- Greyish coloured skin
- Severe belly (abdominal) pain or belly feels hard or is bloated.

For more information:

- ✓ <http://www.cheo.on.ca/en/vomiting-diarrhea>

This general advice cannot cover all possible problems. If there is concern, please contact your physician, healthcare provider or the Emergency Department without delay.