



**Vomiting & Diarrhea**

**What you need to know:**

* Caused by an intestinal infection from a stomach virus
* Highly contagious, practice good hand washing, keep child home if possible
* Symptoms may start with vomiting but diarrhea usually follows within 12-24 hours
* Vomiting alone should resolve within 12-24 hours
* Mild vomiting with diarrhea may last up to one week
* Diarrhea alone may last up to 2 weeks
* Your child may still feel nauseous or have a poor appetite for a few days after symptoms resolve
* Main concern for you and your healthcare provider: dehydration (excessive loss of fluids)
	+ The younger the child, the greater the risk for dehydration
	+ Vomiting with diarrhea carries the greatest risk for dehydration
	+ Oral rehydration solution (ORS) can prevent dehydration
		- Pedialyte, Gerber Replenish, Gatorade (for children > 4, avoid red)

**What you can do at home:**

* Push fluids! **BUT** offer fluids in smaller, more frequent amounts
* Do not be concerned with solids, fluids are most important!
* For bottle-fed infants offer ORS
	+ For vomiting 1-2 times, offer ½ strength formula for 2 feedings, then regular formula
	+ For vomiting > 2 times, offer ORS for 8 hours
		- If ORS is not available, use formula
		- Spoon- or syringe-feed small amounts: 1-2 teaspoons every 5 minutes
		- After 4 hours without vomiting, double the amount
		- After 8 hours without vomiting, return to regular formula
* For breast-fed infants – breast feed in smaller, more frequent amounts
	+ For vomiting 1-2 times, nurse 1 side every 1-2 hours
	+ For vomiting > 2 times, nurse for 4-5 minutes every 30-60 minutes
	+ If infant continues to vomit, switch to ORS for 4 hours
		- Spoon- or syringe-feed small amounts of ORS: 1-2 teaspoons every 5 minutes
		- After 4 hours of ORS, return to breastfeeding for 5 minutes every 30 minutes
* For children > 4 months of age (who have started solids)
	+ After 8 hours without vomiting, give bland/starchy foods
		- Crackers, plain noodles, oatmeal, toast, dry cereal
	+ OK to return to normal diet in 24-48 hours

**For diarrhea alone:**

* Push fluids!
	+ Any fluid EXCEPT fruit juice (milk is OK)
* Offer bland, starchy foods
* If your child eats yogurt, increase yogurt intake (made with healthy bacteria called “probiotics”)
* Can try over-the-counter probiotics for children > 12 months
	+ Kids Culturelle

**What to watch for – signs of dehydration:**

* Decreased urination
	+ No urine in > 4-6 hours for children under 3 years of age
	+ No urine in > 8 hours for children over 3 years of age
* Dark yellow urine
* Dry tongue, mouth and/or lips
* Decreased tear production
* Child is hard to awaken from sleep

**When to call the doctor:**

* Vomiting alone lasts > 24 hours
* Child is unable to hold down any liquids
* Child vomits 8 or more times/day
* At any sign of dehydration
* Blood in stool or vomit
* Age < 3 months with fever
* Age < 3 months with vomiting 2 or more times
* Mild vomiting with diarrhea persists > 1 week
* Diarrhea alone persists > 2 weeks
* Vomiting is a recurrent problem