

ADULT GASTROENTERITIS (Vomiting-Diarrhea)

Gastroenteritis is an irritation of the lining of the stomach and intestines. The cause may be from food poisoning, emotional upsets, infections (viral, bacterial, or parasitic), or overuse of laxatives and/or other medications.

Treatment of Vomiting

1. Rest the stomach. Nothing by mouth for four hours.
2. After the initial hour, begin taking clear liquids such as weak tea, jello water, defizzed (flat) soda pop, clear broth, popsicles, kool-aid, ice chips, half strength Gatorade. Do NOT consume milk or milk products.
3. Patient should start with frequent, small feedings taking only a few sips or swallows every 15 minutes. Consuming too much at one time will further upset the stomach.
4. If the patient can continue frequent, small feedings of clear liquids without vomiting for several hours, slowly increase amounts.
5. If the patient is able to keep liquids down for 24 hours, then the diet can be advanced to toast, crackers, cooked cereal, chicken noodle soup, rice or ripe bananas.
6. If the patient does well with these foods, the diet can gradually be returned to normal, starting with a soft diet of bland foods.
7. Avoid fats, spices, alcohol, and caffeine until recovered.

Treatment of Diarrhea

1. Diarrhea can NOT be successfully treated until vomiting stops.
2. Once vomiting has stopped, wait until stools show some degree of consistency before going to solid foods.
3. When dealing with diarrhea that is not associated with vomiting, stop consumption of milk and solid foods. Patient should be offered clear liquids in any amount as often as wanted.
4. Clear liquids can be safely used for 1 to 2 days until diarrhea is improved or stopped.
5. Gradually return to a normal diet.
6. If at any time patient gets worse, resume with clear liquids.

See your Doctor if:

1. Vomiting that continues for more than 24 hours, even though following the above instructions.
2. Frequent vomiting (every ½ hour), even if only a small amount of clear liquid is given.
3. Appearance of blood in diarrhea or vomitus.
4. Fever over 102 degrees Fahrenheit for more than 24 hours.
5. Patient is hard to arouse or refuses to drink anything.
6. Severe abdominal pain.
7. If dehydration is suspected.
8. Weight loss greater than 5% of body weight.
9. Diarrhea that lasts more than two days.

Contact your physician if you have any questions or problems.