

Emergency Department Vomiting and Diarrhea

General Information

There are many causes of vomiting and diarrhea; the most common cause being a virus. You may have other symptoms such as headache, tiredness, and muscle aches. One treatment for vomiting and diarrhea is to let your stomach and bowels rest. Most cases will resolve on their own with rest.

Instructions

1. Get plenty of rest.
2. Avoid large meals until the vomiting has stopped. Take sips of fluids to stay hydrated. Over the counter dimenhydrinate (Gravol) may help with the nausea.
3. Drink plenty of fluids such as ginger ale, water, broth, or Gatorade for the first 24 hours after the vomiting and diarrhea has stopped. Over the next 24 hours, eat bland foods such as cooked cereals, rice, soup, bread, crackers, baked potatoes, eggs, or apple sauce.
4. **DO NOT** drink alcoholic beverages.
5. Avoid dairy products until you have no symptoms.
6. **DO NOT** eat fruits, vegetables, bran, or fried or spicy foods until your symptoms are gone.
7. You should drink at least 8 glasses of fluid a day.
8. You may resume your normal eating pattern gradually after you are feeling better.
9. Diarrhea can be spread easily - wash your hands after going to the bathroom, and do not let other members of your household use your towel.

Return to Emergency if any of the following develop:

- Severe pain in the abdomen or rectum.
- Temperature of 39.4°C (103°F) or more not relieved by acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil).
- Blood, mucus or worms in the stool.
- Unusual fatigue.
- Unable to keep clear fluids down for more than 12 hours.
- Signs of dehydration, including excessive thirst, little or no urination, dizziness or light-headedness.
- Vomiting blood or dark brown coffee grounds material.
- Bowel movements turn tarry black or bloody.

For more information or questions contact HealthLinkBC at 811.

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