

## DIARRHEA AND VOMITING

Diarrhea and vomiting are usually caused by viral infection of the intestines. Vomiting usually stops within a day, while the diarrhea may last for several days. Dietary changes are primarily important to avoid excessive vomiting and to maintain hydration.

Treatment for children under 2 years of age: Initially clear fluids- no solid foods, no milk, no fruit juices. Any of the following: 1) Pedialyte or Infalyte (available where infant formulas are sold). 2) If these are difficult to purchase or to find, a temporary substitute would be sodas such as cola, 7-up, or gingerale. Stir the soda and let it stand at room temperature. If your child is vomiting, the above fluids should be given in small amounts frequently. Start with one tablespoon every 15 minutes and increase this amount by one tablespoon each hour. If it is the child's bedtime, allow him to go to bed and let his stomach rest until he awakens again.

About 8 hours after the vomiting has stopped, or if there is no vomiting, also give formula (or milk) and solid foods, but do not give fruits except for apples and bananas and do not give juices. If the diarrhea worsens after this, try Prosobee or Isomil (soy formulas). As the diarrhea improves, do not expect to see solid, formed, or even pasty stools but somewhat less frequent, smaller stools with less water content.

Treatment for older children: Initially the same as for younger children except that Pedialyte or Infalyte is rarely necessary; 1/2 strength Gatorade may often be used. Once things are under control, the diet may often be advanced more rapidly than with younger children.

### Call us if:

- 1) your child is not urinating at least every 6 hours or if the diarrhea is so watery and frequent that you cannot tell whether or not urine is being passed;
- 2) your child's mouth feels dry;
- 3) your child has severe abdominal pain or the pain lasts for over 2 hours;
- 4) the diarrhea is not improved after 48 hours;
- 5) mild diarrhea lasts for over one week;
- 6) the diarrhea has blood or lots of mucus;
- 7) the diarrhea is associated with fever greater than 102 degrees;
- 8) the vomiting continues for more than 8 hours;
- 9) there is a possibility of poisoning;
- 10) the symptoms might be due to a medicine the child is taking;
- 11) there is a history of head injury within the past day or two (associated primarily with vomiting);
- 12) your child is acting confused, disoriented, combative (associated primarily with vomiting);
- 13) there are any other symptoms that concern you.