

VOMITING AND DIARRHEA (Gastroenteritis)

Vomiting and diarrhea mostly occurs with viral illnesses of the gastrointestinal tract. Vomiting may also occur with other illnesses, such as urinary tract infections or pneumonia, but when associated with diarrhea one can be reassured that it is usually a viral illness. Parasites and food poisoning can also create these symptoms. Vomiting is an emergency if there is any bloody or green vomitus, and/or extreme stomach pains. If any of the previous occur, your child needs to be seen immediately. Diarrhea is also an emergency if any blood is present. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of loose stools per day. A single or couple of watery stools per day is not true diarrhea, it is simply a loose stool.

Symptoms

Vomiting: associated with or followed by diarrhea

Nausea

Fever/ Chills

Crampy abdominal pain (If the pain is sudden, sharp, and defined to one specific area of the abdomen, your child needs to be evaluated in our office or possibly emergency center)

Treatment

Vomiting and diarrhea may cause your body to lose too much fluid and become dehydrated. Chances are, your child will not want to eat prior to and during a case of gastroenteritis. This is not a problem. Your child must keep hydrated with fluids. Encourage drinking very small amounts of liquid every 5-10 minutes. Always wait 15 minutes after vomiting to give any liquids. The stomach needs time to relax. At this time offer only a teaspoon every 5 minutes of Pedialyte® or Gatorade® or a popsicle to suck on. You may gradually increase amount if child continues to hold liquid down.