



DIARRHEA AND/OR VOMITING

Viral infections are by far the most common cause of gastroenteritis followed by bacterial infections, dietary intolerances, allergies, medications, and medical illness.

Diarrhea

Main Cause-- Diarrhea caused by viruses affects people of all ages and is characterized by bowel movements that are loose or watery and more frequent than typical (this can range from 3 to 15+ times per day). The color can vary, most commonly: yellow, brown, or green. It's not uncommon to have associated fever, abdominal pain, decreased appetite, and even vomiting.

Viral diarrhea is very contagious. The viruses are spread easily —This can be fecal to oral route, which can often occur during diaper changes, is a big reason day care workers and nurses can easily contact the virus. A person can also pick up a virus from a doorknob, a toy, or a shared drink. Hand washing is very, very important!

Blood or mucous in stool needs an office visit for evaluation.

Vomiting

Main Cause--Stomach infections from a stomach virus (such as Noro, Rota, Sapovirus, and Adenoviruses). The illness starts with vomiting for 6-12 hrs followed by watery loose stools or fever.

Coughing- Hard coughing can also cause your child to throw up.

Serious Causes---Vomiting alone (without diarrhea) should stop within about 24 hours. If it lasts over 24 hours, you must think about more serious causes. Examples are appendicitis or a kidney infection especially if with fever and no vomiting. Intestinal blockage may cause green vomit or grossly bloody stools.

What to do:

- increase fluids like breast milk, formula, Pedialyte or ½ strength Gatorade in older kids (not red or purple) and give starchy foods (dried cereals, oatmeal, bread, crackers, noodles, mashed potatoes) and lean meats.
- Avoid fruit juices or full strength sport drinks.
- Start a probiotic such as Florastor Kids or Culturelle Kids, can find sprinkle packets over the counter you can sprinkle on applesauce, yogurt, pudding.
- For vomiting, nothing by mouth for 1 hour. Then small sips of fluids for the next hour after the last vomiting episode. Once no vomiting for 2 hours can start starchy foods such as toast, potatoes, rice, or crackers and lean meats.

DO NOT GIVE PEPTO BISMOL OR IMODIUM

When to call the office and make an appointment:

- Appears dehydrated or not taking anything by mouth, urinates fewer than 3 times in 24 hours, has a dry mouth, seems listless or lethargic, produces more than 10 stools in a day, stools are black or have blood or mucus.

GREEN VOMIT IS AN EMERGENCY AND MAY SIGNIFY A BOWEL OBSTRUCTION- CALL IMMEDIATELY