



Diarrhoea & Vomiting

Patient information Leaflet

April 2020

INTRODUCTION

This leaflet is to help you understand diarrhoea and vomiting and what to do if it occurs.

What causes Diarrhoea and Vomiting? (D&V)

The most common cause of D&V is an infection caused by a virus which affects the lining of the gut. In most children, the symptoms are mild and they tend to get better within a few days. If vomiting occurs, it often lasts only a day or so but sometimes longer. Diarrhoea often continues after the vomiting stops and commonly lasts for between 5 to 7 days. Slightly loose stools may persist for a week or so further before a normal pattern returns. Sometimes the symptoms can last longer.

Signs and symptoms of dehydration

- Pass little urine.
- Fewer tears when crying
- Sunken eyes
- Weakness
- Lethargic

What to do

- If your child vomits, wait 5-10 minutes and then start giving drinks again, but more slowly. Use of a syringe can help in younger children who may not be able to take sips. (See fluid challenge advice)
- Rehydration drinks may be advised by a Doctor or Pharmacist. They are made from sachets and you should follow the instructions on how to make them. Rehydration drinks provide a perfect balance of water, salts, and sugar. The small amount of sugar and salt helps the water to be absorbed better from the gut (intestines) into the body.
- If your child will not drink the rehydration drinks, give squash (full sugar variety) or diluted apple juice. Milk can cause your child to vomit or make diarrhoea worse so this should be avoided for 24-48 hours.
- Give Paracetamol – follow the directions on the bottle – if your child is uncomfortable with a temperature or ‘tummy ache’; follow the instructions on the bottle
- Wash your hands frequently especially after toileting your child or changing their nappy. Encourage your child to wash their hands often as well.
- Your doctor may need a stool sample to determine the infection causing the diarrhoea and vomiting.
- Gradually introduce light diet: avoid fatty foods like chips, sweets, fizzy drinks and high fibre food for 24-48 hours.
- If your child refuses to drink and has not passed urine within 12 hours or is drowsy, irritable and lethargic, seek medical advice.

Most children who have gastroenteritis have mild symptoms which will get better in a few days. The important thing is to ensure that they have plenty to drink. In many

cases, you do not need to seek medical advice. However, you should seek medical advice in the following situations (or if there are any other symptoms that you are concerned about):

- If your child is under the age of 6 months.
- If your child has an underlying medical condition (for example, heart or kidney problems, diabetes, history of premature birth).
- If your child has a high temperature (fever).
- If you suspect your child is becoming dehydrated (lack of fluid in the body).
- If your child appears drowsy or confused.
- If your child is being sick (vomiting) and unable to keep any fluids down.
- If there is blood in their diarrhoea or vomit.
- If your child has severe tummy (abdominal) pain.
- If your child has started with these symptoms after travelling abroad.
- If your child has severe symptoms or if you feel that their condition is getting worse.
- If your child's symptoms are not settling (for example, vomiting for more than 1-2 days, or diarrhoea that does not start to settle after 3-4 days).

Fluid Challenge Advice

If your child is vomiting the best advice is to give fluid little and often.

This is a guide only. For further advice speak to your GP, Nurse or Local Pharmacist.

Age of Child	6 – 23 months	2 – 5 years	6-10 years	11 years +
Approximate amount of fluid to give. Gradually increase as tolerates.	Give 5mls every 10 minutes	Give 10 mls every 10 minutes	Give 10-15 mls every 10-15 minutes	Give 15-20mls every 10 – 15 minutes.

Useful Contact Numbers:

- Children's Unit 0161 922 5252 (24 hrs)
- Children's Community Team 0161 922 5251 (08.00-20.00 mon-sun)
- NHS Direct 111 (24hr helpline)
- You can also contact your GP for advice.

Useful Websites/information:

- Department of Health (www.dh.gov.uk)
- NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk/conditions)
- NHS institute for innovation and improvement (www.institute.nhs.uk)
- NHS Improvement (www.improvement.nhs.uk)

If you have any questions you want to ask, you can use this space below to remind you

If you have a visual impairment this leaflet can be made available in bigger print or on audiotape. If you require either of these options please contact the Patient Information Centre on 0161 922 5332

If you require an interpreter, please ask an appropriate person to contact our central booking office between Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm on 0161 922 6991 to arrange this for you.

語言翻譯及病者支持服務 (LIPS):

如果閣下需要翻譯員在您的預約當日幫助您的話 請找一名合適的家庭成員 **0161 922 6991** 聯絡本中央預約辦事處來您您安排 我們的辦公時間是星期一至星期五 上午 8 時至下午 5 時

Językowo Tłumaczeniowa Usługa Pomocy dla Pacjenta (Language, Interpretation and Patient Support Service LIPS):

Jeśli potrzebujesz pomocy tłumacza w trakcie swojej wizyty, proszę poprosić odpowiedniego członka rodziny o skontaktowanie się z Centralnym Biurem Zamówień (Central Booking Office), w celu zorganizowania tłumacza pomiędzy poniedziałkiem a piątkiem w godzinach od 08:00 - 17:00 pod numerem **0161 922 6991**.

لیپس سروس، انٹرنیشنل اینڈپیشنٹ سپورٹ سروس (Lips)

اگر آپ کو اپنی اپائنٹمنٹ کے لئے مترجم کی مدد کی ضرورت ہو تو براہ مہربانی اپنے خاندان کے کسی موزوں فرد سے کہیں کہ وہ ہمارے سنٹرل بکنگ آفس سے پیر سے جمعہ 8.00 بجے صبح سے 5.00 بجے شام کے دوران 0161 922 6991 پر فون کر کے اس کا بندوبست کریں۔

References: Diarrhoea and Vomiting (2018) NHS Choices

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/>

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