

Education

DIARRHEA

DIARRHEA is the sudden increase in the frequency and looseness of bowel movements. Diarrhea is usually caused by a viral infection of the intestines (viral gastroenteritis). Diarrhea can also be due to excessive fruit juice or to a food allergy. Occasionally, diarrhea can be due to abnormal bacteria as well. Diarrhea may last from several days to a week, regardless of treatment. The main goal of therapy is to prevent dehydration. (Barton D. Schmitt, MD, 1999)

TREATMENT FOR DIARRHEA

- * Pedialyte in frequent small amounts.
- * A lactose free diet may be helpful in reducing diarrhea, but may delay full recovery.
Dairy products contain lactose; yogurt (probiotic) best to try first, to help with recovery
- * For babies soy formula or diluting formula with extra Pedialyte for 2 days may reduce diarrhea.
- * Dilute juices (white grape) are acceptable to start, but can advance to other foods if not vomiting.
- * If not vomiting can start starchy foods to help firm up the stools (pasta, rice, cereal, crackers, toast, pretzels, bananas, white potatoes)
- * Avoid spicy and fatty foods for 2-4 days

CALL BACK IF....

- * Bloody stools
- * Severe abdominal pain
- * Fever is present for longer than 3 days
- * Any signs of dehydration, which include: lethargy, no urination for 12 hours, no tears, dry mouth, sunken eyes, and dry lips and tongue
- * The diarrhea does not slow down after 5 to 7

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