

Vomiting and Diarrhea in Children

These illnesses (usually caused by viruses) are common, and last about 3 to 10 days. Most children can be managed at home without the use of medications by simply changing their diet.

When problems begin:

• Vomiting:

Give **no food or drink** for 1 to 2 hours after vomiting. Your child may be thirsty, but their stomach needs a rest, and giving fluids will likely make them worse.

Change to a **liquid diet**:

- Age birth to 2 months: Please call your doctor (282-2229) and discuss your situation.
- Age 2 mo-1 Year: After the child has not vomited for about 2 hours, start giving them small, frequent amounts of liquid (½ to 1½ ounces, every 15 to 20 minutes). Give them Pedialyte or Pediatric Electrolyte Supplement (generic Pedialyte).
Do not give formula or orange juice.
- Age 1 yr-teenager: After the child has not vomited for about two hours, offer them Pedialyte, Pedialyte popsicles, half strength Gatorade (regular Gatorade mixed with water ounce for ounce) regular non-diet sodas, or Popsicles.
Do not give milk or orange juice.

• Diarrhea without vomiting:

Provide a **liquid diet**: Give Pedialyte or the other liquids listed above for age. Give the child as much as he or she will take.

After the first 6 to 12 hours:

- Change to a **bland diet** 6 to 12 hours after vomiting or diarrhea begins (but wait at least 2 hours after the last vomit). Add additional liquids and foods such as Popsicles, diluted fruit juices, bananas, rice, applesauce, toast, potatoes, pasta/noodles.

After 12 to 24 hours:

- Return to the child's **usual diet** if the vomiting has subsided for several hours. If the vomiting lasted 12 to 24 hours, stay on the bland diet 12 to 24 hours before returning to the usual diet.

After the first day:

- Loose bowel movements may continue for 5 to 10 days before returning to normal.

Contact your doctor if your child:

Has a dry mouth
Continues to vomit for 24 hours or longer
Refuses to drink
Has bloody stool
Urines less often than once every 8 hours
Has stomach pain that won't go away
Seems unusually sleepy
Becomes worse or doesn't appear to be improving after a few hours