

Rehydrating your child

What causes vomiting and diarrhea?

Vomiting and diarrhea are often caused by a minor infection. Both are common problems in infants and children. Most often they are caused by a virus, not bacteria. Antibiotics will not help. Adult medicine is not safe for infants and children. Vomiting and diarrhea may cause your child to lose too much fluid. This is called dehydration. Often times, vomiting and diarrhea can be treated at home.

How are vomiting and diarrhea treated at home?

Replace the fluids

Replacing the fluids is called rehydration. This can be done at home. Fluids are replaced a little bit at a time while your child is awake. Giving a lot of fluid at once can cause your child to throw up.

After 30 minutes of not throwing up, give your child small amounts of fluids.

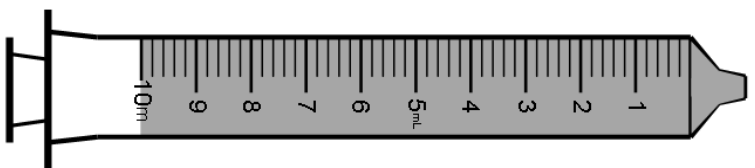
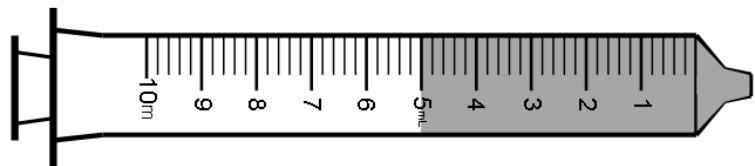
What to give

- For infants up to 10 months old, use Pedialyte® or Enfalyte®, Liquilytes® or generic electrolyte solution.
- For babies over 10 months of age, use:
 - Gatorade® or Sports drinks
 - Jell-O®
 - Popsicles®
 - Soup broth
 - Caffeine-free white soda such as Sprite®, 7Up®, or ginger ale.
 - Apple juice that is mixed with an equal amount of water or Pedialyte®.

Note: Do not give red Gatorade. It can make the vomit or diarrhea look like there is blood in it.

How much to give

- Breastfed babies should be nursed more often for less time.
- Children 6 months to 4 years: give 5 mL every 5 minutes for the first hour. If your child does not throw up, give 10 mL every 5 minutes for the next hour.
- Children over 4 years: give 10 mL every 5 minutes for the first hour. If your child does not throw up, give 20 mL every 5 minutes for the next hour.



If your child does not throw up, you can give more to drink for the next 4 to 6 hours.

When can I start giving solid food again?

If your child has not thrown up after 4 to 6 hours of fluids, start to give small amounts of solid food. Eating too much too fast may cause more throwing up. Start with:

- Ripe or strained banana
- Plain rice
- Canned fruit in heavy syrup
- Plain noodles
- Cooked refined cereal (no sugar added) such as Cream of Wheat[®], Cream of Rice[®]
- Dry unsweetened cereal such as Cheerios[®] or Kix[®]
- Plain toast
- Soda crackers
- Yogurt
- Pretzels

Wait for 24 before starting your child's normal diet. If your child throws up, wait 30 minutes and start the fluids from the beginning.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child:

- Has sunken eyes, no tears when crying or a dry mouth.
- Has no wet diaper or urine for 8 to 10 hours.
- Has blood in vomit or diarrhea.
- Is more sleepy, restless or crabby than normal.
- Has special healthcare needs not covered by this teaching sheet

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.