



Tri-Valley Schools

A note from the Nurse:

How to Care for a Child with Vomiting and/or Diarrhea

The following information will be helpful to you as you care for your child who has vomiting and/or diarrhea. This illness is most often caused by a virus and there are many different viruses that can cause the same symptoms. This illness is frequently called “the flu” but it is actually gastroenteritis. It is much different from influenza, the true “flu”, which is fever, cough, runny nose, and general body aches. The influenza vaccine that is given in the fall each year does not protect us from gastroenteritis.

Please follow these guidelines to help your child recover as soon as possible. These guidelines may also be used for adults.

1. If your child has vomited, do not give any food or drink for 1 hour.
2. After 1 hour without vomiting, you may give 2 small sips of a clear liquid like flat Pepsi, Coke, Sprite, tea or Gatorade. To make a drink flat, stir it rapidly to get all the bubbles out. Pepsi or Coke syrup is soothing to the stomach. Do not give milk or 100% fruit juices. You may give other juices like Hi-C that have been diluted with water. Avoid red juices so that you won't confuse it with blood if it gets vomited or passed in a loose bowel movement.
3. If the sips stay down for 15 minutes, you should offer a few more sips every 15 minutes. If your child vomits again, you must wait **1 hour again** and then start over with the sips.
4. You may offer popsicles and plain Jello if your child is tolerating the sips of clear liquids. You should **not** give any solid foods until there has been no vomiting for **6-8 hours**.
5. When starting solids, offer saltines, ripe bananas, applesauce, rice, baked potato or plain cooked pasta. Offer very small amounts at one time.
6. The child with diarrhea should be on clear liquids for 12-24 hours. Then you may start the same solids as above. The bowel movements should become mushy, then soft and then more normal as the illness resolves.
7. As your child starts to feel hungry, offer foods from their regular diet slowly and avoid fried or greasy foods for 2-3 more days.

The most serious complication of a vomiting/diarrhea illness is dehydration. Your child's mouth should be moist and there should be urine output every 6-8 hours. You should consult your doctor if you have any questions about the illness and if you do not see any improvement after 12-24 hours.

Your child may return to school when there has been **no fever or vomiting/diarrhea for a full 24 hours**. Your child must also have the energy needed to participate fully in all school activities. If you have questions, you may reach me by calling the school. I will return your call at my first opportunity.

