

## Vomiting and Diarrhea

Vomiting is differentiated from spitting up by volume. Vomiting suggests that a large amount of stomach contents has been ejected, spitting up is usually a relatively effortless spitting up of a mouthful or two of stomach contents and is usually seen in babies under year of age.

Most causes of vomiting are viral or caused by eating something that causes stomach upset.

Most vomiting stops within 6 to 24 hours. Diarrhea will usually persist for several days.

After an episode of vomiting, let your child rest for about 30 minutes. At that point offer a small volume, usually about one to two teaspoons (5 to 10 mL), of a clear liquid such as Pedialyte about every 10 minutes. If they can hold that down for several times, then offer slightly larger amounts of a clear liquid. If they have not vomited after 6 to 12 hours, you can return to the nutrition containing foods. This is especially important in infants. If there has been no vomiting for 24 hours a normal diet can usually be resumed. A normal diet is appropriate for children who are having diarrhea.

Breast-fed infants need to get back to breast-feeding as soon as they can after vomiting. After they have been not vomiting for about 4 hours it is appropriate to try them back on breast milk but in reduced volumes.

Older children are easier to deal with during vomiting and diarrhea illnesses. They can use water in place of the clear liquids such as Pedialyte recommended for infants. The initial volume after vomiting can be as high as a tablespoon (15 mL). Otherwise the recommendations are much the same.

In general we do not recommend medications to stop vomiting in infants because their side effects can be significant.

You should call us or be seen right away for signs or symptoms of dehydration including excessively dry lips, dry mouth, or long periods of time (over 8 hours) with no urine output. We should also see your child if there is blood in the vomited material or in the diarrhea. If there is dramatic abdominal pain we also wish to see your child.