

Diarrhoea and Vomiting Caused by Gastroenteritis: Advice Sheet for Children 0-5 years old

Name of child: _____ Age: _____ Date/Time advice given: _____

Further advice/Follow-up: _____

Name of Professional: _____ Signature of Professional: _____

How is your baby/child? Sudden change to runny poo with or without vomiting?

Green

- If none of the factors below are present

Self Care

Using the advice overleaf you can provide the care your child needs at home

Amber

- If your child's health gets worse or if you are worried
- If you child is not drinking, or is passing less urine/less heavy nappies
- If your child has signs of dehydration including dry mouth, no tears, sunken eyes, sunken fontanelle (soft spot on baby's head), drowsiness and generally seems more unwell
- If your child develops pale or mottled skin or has cold hands and feet.

You need to see or Speak to a doctor or a nurse today.

Please ring your GP surgery. Out of Hours GP or call 111

Red

- If your child develops high temperature and rigors (shakes)
- If your child develops abdominal pain (tummy ache)
- If your child develops headache especially if only vomiting
- If your child develops worsening dehydration or green vomit
- If your child develops if your child develops blood in stool
- If your child has a fit.

You need urgent help

Please phone 999
Or go to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department

Some useful numbers

GP Surgery (make a note of the number of your surgery here) _____

Health visitor service (make a note of the number of your health visitor here) _____

NHS 111: You can call Hertfordshire 111 service when you need medical help but it's not a 999 emergency. It is open 24 hours a day, every day. Calls are free from landlines and from mobiles.

Parent's/Carer's Information Leaflet

Diarrhoea and vomiting in children under 5 years old

Your child has been assessed by a Health Professional. We believe it is safe for you to look after your child at home. This leaflet will give you advice on how to do this. If you are worried, you should see your GP, go to the Children's Emergency Department or call **NHS111**.

What is Gastroenteritis?

Diarrhoea and vomiting is usually caused by an infection – we call this gastroenteritis. In most cases, there is no specific treatment, and the infection gets better by itself. Whilst the symptoms continue it is important to make sure that your child does not get dehydrated. You should also be aware of changes to look out for which would mean that you should seek further help.

Practical things you can do to help your child

If your child has gastroenteritis but is not dehydrated:

- Keep feeding them as normal (for example, breast milk) and offer plenty of drinks.
- If they cannot drink or are being sick give small amounts often – e.g. by a spoon or syringe.
- Fruit juice and fizzy drinks should be discouraged, because these can make diarrhoea worse.
- The best fluid to give is ORS (Oral Rehydration Salt Solution, or Dioralyte). This is because it contains the right balance of fluid, sugars and salts. However many children do not like the taste of ORS. If this is the case you should discuss this with us.

If your child seems dehydrated you need to see or speak to a doctor or a nurse today.

How to treat mild dehydration at home

- Most children who are dehydrated can be rehydrated by giving them ORS to drink. If they really are dehydrated they will drink it! Give your child frequent, small drinks of ORS.
- Make up the ORS according to the instructions on the packet. Your healthcare professional can tell you how much your child should drink. Your child may vomit a little when they start to drink the ORS.
- Contact a healthcare professional if your child keeps vomiting or will not drink the solution.
- If you are breastfeeding your child, continue to breastfeed in addition to giving the ORS.
- Your child should not eat solid food until they are rehydrated.
- Try to keep your child well hydrated to prevent further dehydration.

Caring for your child after gastroenteritis

- During a period of gastroenteritis your child may lose quite a bit of weight.
- It's important your child eats well after they are rehydrated, to help with recovery.
- Your child can start to eat solid food straight away – it may be best to start with simple foods. Continue with feeding unless the diarrhoea and vomiting is made much worse.
- Your child should drink plenty of their usual fluids. This should include breast or other milk feeds. There is no need to dilute the milk
- You should avoid giving your child fruit juice or fizzy drinks until the diarrhoea has stopped. We may also recommend that your child drinks ORS after each bout of diarrhoea.

How long will my child be ill?

Diarrhoea often lasts for 5–7 days and in most children it will stop within 2 weeks. In some cases it can take a few months for your child's stool to return completely back to normal. Vomiting often lasts for 1–2 days and in most children it will stop within 3 days. If your child's symptoms are taking longer to get better then you should contact a healthcare professional.

Preventing the spread of Gastroenteritis

Hand washing is the best way to help stop other people getting gastroenteritis. You and/or your child should wash your hands with soap (liquid if possible) in warm running water and then dry them carefully: after going to the toilet/ after changing nappies/ before touching food.

Your child should not:

- share his or her towels with anyone,
- go to school or any other childcare facility until 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting,
- swim in swimming pools until 2 weeks after the diarrhoea has stopped.