

Vomiting & Dehydration

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Vomiting can be serious problem by itself, or it could be a sign of a more serious underlying condition. Make sure you call Dr. Bassett's office if you have any concerns!

Your Goals in caring for a vomiting child:

- Keep child from dehydrating
- Keep child out of the ER
- Prevent other family members from getting sick
- Get child back to a normal diet as soon as possible

Our method for giving fluids to a vomiting child:

- Give 1 tsp of ice-cold Pedialyte every 10 minutes. Do not give your child a large cup of Pedialyte expecting them to take only a sip. Give them a medicine cup or shot glass with 1 tsp in it.
- If the child is able to keep that down for 2 hours, you can offer a larger amount but space out the sips longer (i.e. 2 tsp every 20 minutes).
- If the child is able to keep that down for 6 hours, again offer a larger amount and again space it out (i.e. 2 oz every 2 hours). You will notice that this is still the same amount as 1 tsp every 10 minutes, you're just getting the belly used to having larger amounts at a time.
- If at any point in this routine the child vomits again, do not give anything to drink for 45 minutes, then start again at the first step.
- In general, it's a good idea not to try any solid foods until it is clear that the child can keep down fluids. This is usually 12 hours after the last episode of vomiting.
- When starting solid foods, again use small frequent snacks. Crackers, dry toast and Jello work well.
- After 24 hours, it's okay to head back to a regular diet, with a few alterations. Focus more on starchy, easy to digest foods like pasta, rice, and fruits. Try to stay away from fatty, spicy, and greasy foods (French fries and chicken nuggets).

If your child shows signs of dehydration, call our office immediately. These signs are...

- Pale skin, blotchy extremities
- Sunken dry eyes, or sunken "soft spot" in babies
- Dry lips, dry tongue
- Lack of tears when crying
- Decreased urine output (less than every 5-6 hours), dark urine
- Rapid resting heart beat and poor energy

Other reasons to call the doctor:

- Blood in vomit or bright green vomit
- Severe cramping
- High fevers

Other important information about vomiting and dehydration:

- Wash your hands frequently to prevent the spread of vomiting and diarrhea
- Medicines like Phenergan suppositories may help with nausea, however they cannot be used for every child or in every case.
- Very often, diarrhea follows vomiting a day or so later. That's ok – usually the vomiting is done by that point and you can easily keep up with the fluid lost from diarrhea. If the vomiting and diarrhea are occurring together, your child is at serious risk for dehydration.
- Your child should not go back to school or daycare until at least the day after vomiting stops.