

Gastroenteritis/Oral Rehydration Instructions:

For infants less than 1 year of age:

Use oral rehydration solutions (i.e. Pedialyte) or breast milk (see below). Start with a very small amount such as 1 teaspoon (5 ml) with a medicine syringe, gradually increasing the amount you are giving up to 1oz (30 ml) every 10 minutes in a bottle or cup or syringe. The trick is small amounts of oral rehydration solutions frequently. Don't be discouraged if your baby has some vomiting still, you are just trying to get more in than comes out. You should NOT give the baby water or juice or formula during this time.

If you are breastfeeding, you can continue to give breast milk during the illness. Nurse for a shorter time on just one side and more frequently than usual. Breast milk is as good as oral rehydration solutions for keeping the baby hydrated.

If your baby has stopped vomiting for 8 hours, you can start to reintroduce formula and bland baby foods like rice cereal, baby apple sauce, bananas (if your baby is old enough).

Watch closely to make sure your baby is having at least 1 wet diaper every 8 hours.

For children 1 and older:

Give small amounts of clear fluids (Pedialyte, Gatorade, diluted white grape juice, water, ginger ale) frequently. An example would be to let a child drink 1oz (30 ml) every 10 minutes for an hour. If this is tolerated, increase the volume to 2oz (60 ml) every 10-15 minutes and so on. Avoid the temptation to let them drink as much as they can all at once – this can lead to continued vomiting. You can also use popsicles (plain juice pops or Pedialyte pops) to help get your child to take clear fluids slowly.

Once your child is keeping down clear fluids without vomiting for 6 hours, you can gradually add back the bland foods such as plain crackers, cheerios, toast, chicken broth, applesauce, rice, bananas, pasta, cooked plain chicken, etc... If at any point vomiting starts again, return to clear fluids and the instructions above.

Watch closely to make sure your child is urinating at least 3 times in 24 hours.

If diarrhea is accompanying the vomiting, your pediatrician may recommend you start a probiotic (i.e. Culturelle) which has been shown to shorten the number of days of diarrhea in viral gastroenteritis. This can be found over the counter in the vitamin area of the pharmacy. The dose for children is one adult capsule or one packet of powder or one chewable every day. This can be sprinkled into a soft room temperature food.

Call your doctor at 401-884-8900 if:

Vomiting in baby (less than 1 year) lasts more than 24 hours OR no wet diapers for 8 hours

Vomiting in child older than 1 year lasts more than 48 hours OR if urinating less than 3 times per day

Your baby is crying and cannot be consoled

Your child looks ill or dehydrated (sunken eyes, sunken flat spot on the babies)

Your child has vomited blood or has blood in the stools

Your child is complaining of severe belly pain for more than 15-20 minutes

You are concerned