

Gastroenteritis

Gastroenteritis is caused by irritation of the stomach and/or the intestines. Often a diarrhea specimen is required for lab testing to help determine the cause of your symptoms which may include:

- Infection (bacterial, viral or parasitic)
- Stress, anxiety, depression
- Food and drug intolerance
- Traveler's diarrhea
- Heat exhaustion
- Appendicitis
- Toxic chemicals
- Pregnancy

Gastroenteritis includes a wide spectrum of symptoms. For mild symptoms such as loss of appetite, nausea, loose stools, increased gas and/or mild cramping, self treatment through diet, non-prescription drugs and rest is usually all that is required.

First 12 – 24 hours	Clear Liquid Diet	Next 1 – 3 days	Bland Diet
No milk products Gatorade, 7 Up, ginger ale, other clear sodas Water Jello (clear) Popsicles (no ice cream) Tea, herb tea Fruit Juices (diluted) in moderation Broth (chicken or beef)		No milk products No whole grains or uncooked vegetables Bananas, pears, applesauce Toast (no butter), bread, soda crackers Rice Boiled or baked potatoes (no butter or gravy) Cream of wheat or rice cereal Soups (not creamy or spicy) Small amounts of boiled chicken, lean beef	
Take frequent small sips to start; then gradually increase the amount until you can get 3 1/2 to 4 quarts down in 24 hours. Vary the types of fluids, not just water. Alcohol and caffeinated drinks are NOT tolerated with these symptoms.			

R_x: Tylenol (not aspirin) for fever and pain. Kaopectate® or Pepto Bismol® for diarrhea.

Hygiene: Wash hands well with warm, soapy water after using bathroom to limit infecting others.

Rest: Get extra sleep and limit exposure to others.

Medical care: return to clinic if not better in 2-3 days

More severe symptoms like vomiting for more than 2 days, diarrhea more than 6-8 times per day, blood in stools, weakness, painful cramping and/or fever over 101° should be evaluated by your healthcare provider. Treatment will vary depending upon the diagnosis. It is important to follow instructions carefully and to let your provider know if you are not getting better.



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