

Instructions for Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea: “Viral Gastroenteritis”

Viral gastroenteritis usually runs a limited course and resolves on its own without professional or medical treatment. Unless you show symptoms listed below (see: “Seek Immediate Medical Care”), try the following home care recommendations:

For the first 6 -12 hours:

- Drink *small* sips of *clear* liquid frequently – for example: one sip every 10 minutes. Take only what you feel you can tolerate. Clear, cool beverages are recommended. Ice chips or popsicles often stay down easily because they don’t stimulate a strong swallow/gag response. If you have been vomiting or have had diarrhea, you can use electrolyte/sports drinks. Clear carbonated drinks such as ginger ale that you let flatten slightly are also good, and the ginger can have an anti-nausea effect.

After you have kept down clear liquids for 6-12 hours without vomiting:

- Try something a little more solid such as jello, soup, yogurt, or a fruit smoothie
- Many patients notice it is difficult to digest dairy (except yogurt) after being ill, so you may want to avoid it for the first couple of days.

After keeping down semi-solid foods for another 6-12 hours:

- Try bland foods for the next 24 hours. An easy way to remember bland foods:
 - B – bananas (good source of potassium lost with nausea/vomiting)
 - R – rice (plain or with a little soy sauce or cinnamon/sugar on it)
 - A – applesauce (not apple juice: this can cause more diarrhea)
 - T - toast, bread, or bagels without butter (use jelly, cinnamon)
 - Y – yogurt (unsweetened/pro-biotic, with a little honey or jam is best)
- Add plain deli meats or other proteins as tolerated
- Eat small amounts frequently and slowly throughout the day

***Reminder:* Your stools won't be solid again until you are eating solid food, so it's normal to still have soft stools for several days.

Avoid:

Citrus, spicy, or fatty foods until 1-2 days AFTER symptoms are GONE. This may mean you are eating fairly bland food for several days.

Seek immediate medical care if:

- You have signs of dehydration: decreased or no urine production, dry mouth or skin, no tears, weakness or lightheadedness
- You have a fever of 101.5 F or greater, or fever persists after 4-5 days
- You have bloody diarrhea or vomit
- You have severe or increasing abdominal pain
- You develop any new or worsening symptoms
- Symptoms last more than about 4-5 days

Campus Health Services has providers and nurses who can assist you any time (day or night). If you have any questions or concerns: 502-852-6479.