

## **Vomiting.**

Vomiting is the forceful ejection of a large portion of the stomach's contents through the mouth. Most commonly it is caused by a viral infection of the stomach (viral gastritis) or eating something that disagrees with your child.

The vomiting usually stops in 6-24 hours. Resting the stomach and slowly offering fluid and food to your child will help them recover. Diarrhea often occurs if it is caused by a virus and can continue for several days. Fever can also accompany the vomiting for a few days.

### For Bottle-Fed Infants (less than 1 year old)

- Let their stomachs rest for an hour or more
- If they have only vomited once offer your child a teaspoon of half-strength formula every 10 minutes.
- If they have vomited two or more times offer them the same quantity of rehydration solution (such as Pedialyte)
- If they have kept down the teaspoons of fluid for a few hours you can advance to an ounce every 20 -30 minutes
- If they start vomiting again, let the stomach rest once more for an hour or more and start over with the teaspoons of fluid.
- If they are keeping the fluids down, advance slowly. You may go back to full strength formula and offer them food. They can return to a regular diet in 24-48 hours as tolerated.

### For Breast-Fed Infants.

- Reduce the amount of time per feeding
- Provide breast milk in smaller amounts. The goal is to avoid filling the stomach
- If your baby vomits twice, nurse on only one side every 1-2 hours
- If they vomit more than two times, nurse for 4-5 minutes every 30-60 minutes
- After 8 hours of no vomiting return to regular breast feeding.

### For Older Children (more than 1 year old)

- Fluids to offer include water (ice chips), or popsicles.
- Let the child's stomach rest with no fluids for 1-2 hours
- Offer 1 tablespoon every 10 minutes
- After several hours without vomiting, increase the amount of fluids to an ounce every 20-30 minutes
- If vomiting reoccurs, rest the stomach completely for 1 hour or more, then start over with one tablespoon of fluid every 10 minutes
- Offer the child starchy foods if they are interested in eating (saltine cracker, bread, rice, mashed potatoes, etc...)
- Advance to a normal diet as tolerated

### Common Mistakes

A common error is to give as much fluid as a child wants rather than gradually increasing the amount. This almost always leads to continued vomiting. If the child's stomach is upset and you put more fluids into it, they will likely vomit again, so letting the stomach rest is a very important step and in the long run will help them to keep more fluids down. Vomiting alone will not usually cause dehydration.

### Things to watch for:

- Keep track of vomiting episodes and urination.
- If the child has fever, consider using acetaminophen suppositories to make them more comfortable. Giving them medication by mouth can make them vomit more.

### Call our office if:

- The child can't keep any fluids down after resting the stomach
- There are any signs of dehydration (no urine in over 8 hours, very dry mouth, or no tears)
- Any blood appears in the vomit
- Persistent abdominal pain for over 4 hours
- Your child starts acting very sick
- The vomiting continues for more than 24 hours in a child under 2 or for more than 48 hours in a child over 2.