

## ***Hints to Help with Diarrhea***

The following information has been developed to help you to manage diarrhea. Your doctor or nurse will review this information with you and answer any questions you may have.

### ***Why is diarrhea management important?***

Diarrhea is the frequent passage of soft or liquid stools. It causes you to lose fluids with each bowel movement. This loss of fluids can make you become dehydrated.

Signs that you may be dehydrated and need more fluids include: dry mouth, dry skin, feeling more thirsty than normal, urine that is dark yellow in color, less frequent urination than usual, or a weight loss of several pounds in just a day or two.

### ***Hints to help:***

- Drink plenty of liquids throughout the day – at least ½ cup (4 oz.) every hour during the day. You should be drinking at least 8-10 glasses a day.
- Liquids at room temperature are usually easier to tolerate. Avoid very hot or very cold beverages.
- Eating small meals and snacks often throughout the day may be easier to tolerate than eating large meals two or three times a day.
- Drink and eat high-sodium foods, such as broths, soups, sports drinks, crackers, and pretzels. Most sports drinks (like Gatorade®) can help replace electrolytes lost through persistent diarrhea.
- Drink and eat high-potassium foods, such as fruit juices and nectars, potatoes and bananas.
- A good choice of foods to eat when you have diarrhea is called the BRAT diet.  
B= bananas R= rice A= applesauce T= toast
- Lying down may help reduce intestinal contractions that move food through the bowel.
- Do not drink fluids with a straw as this can increase gas. Let soda stand until the fizz has lessened to prevent gas and bloating.
- Do not eat greasy, fried, or spicy foods. Avoid high fiber foods such as raw fruits and vegetables, breads, cereals and crackers made with whole grain and bran.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages and coffee as these can make diarrhea worse.
- Some people with diarrhea may begin to have trouble digesting milk. If this is a problem for you, try switching to milk and milk products that have the lactose removed. Lactaid® and Dairy-Ease® are examples.
- Limit sugar-free gums and candies made with sorbitol, xylitol or mannitol. These can cause diarrhea, gas and bloating.

**Your doctor may prescribe an anti-diarrheal medication. Make sure you take it as directed.**

***Your anti-diarrheal medication***

**Name:**

**How often:**

**Dose:**

***Call your doctor if:***

- You have diarrhea that lasts more than 2 days.
- You have a fever of 100.5° or above.
- Your abdomen becomes swollen.
- You notice blood in your stool.
- You lose 2 or more pounds in 1 to 2 days.

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