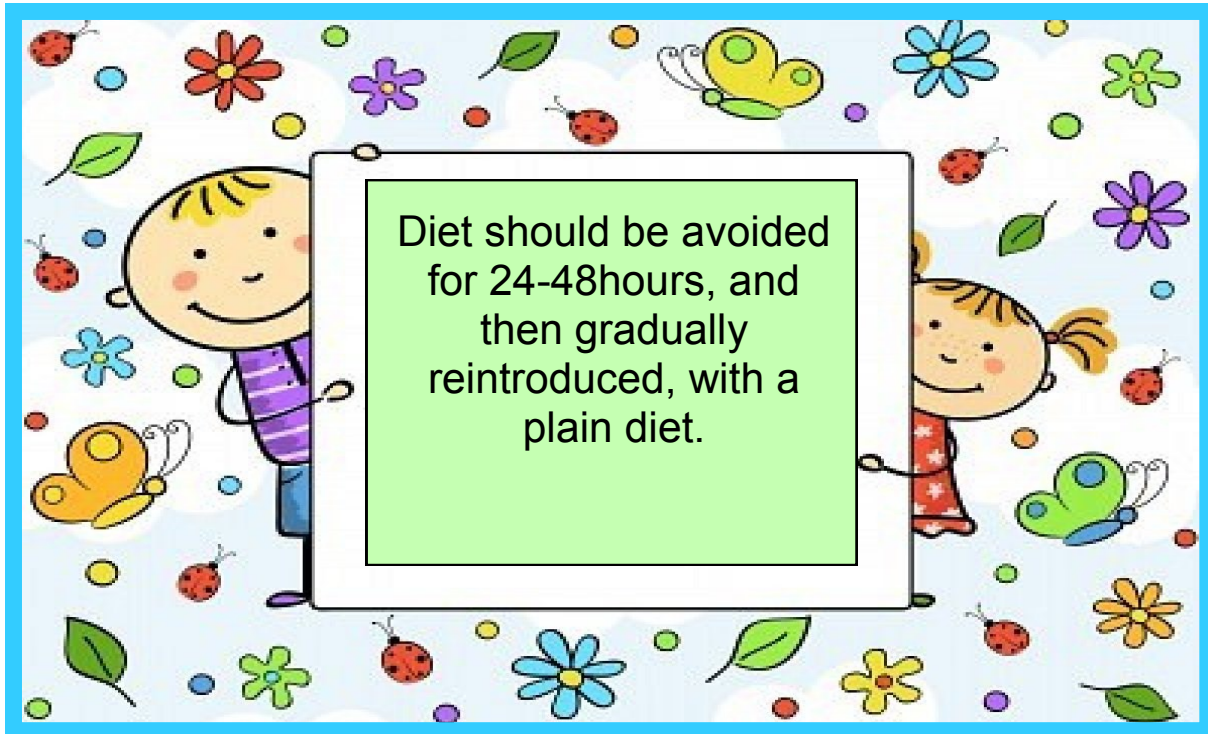


# Tell Me All About.....

## Diarrhoea and Vomiting





Diarrhoea and vomiting often occurs in children, and the most common cause is an infection in the gut. This is known as Gastroenteritis. Sometimes this can be infectious, and this is why we will ask you to stay in a cubicle on the ward. You will also see a green infection control notice on the door as a reminder to staff and visitors on how to avoid spreading the infection.

Unless there is a bacterial cause for the illness, antibiotics are of no help to treat the illness, and can sometimes make it worse. There is no treatment other than making sure your child doesn't become dehydrated (dry), due to the loss of body fluids.

Some children will be managed by small drinks offered frequently, some children may require Oral Rehydration Salt Solutions (ORS), such as Dioralyte, some children may require a tube to be passed down their nose into their tummy, and fluids replaced this way, or occasional children may require a 'drip' (intravenous fluids).

If you are breastfeeding you should continue to do this and ORS can be given in addition to breast milk if your baby continues to vomit.

Avoid chilled fruit juices or fizzy drinks until the Diarrhoea has stopped.

Once your child is able to keep enough drinks down that the nurses and doctors don't think they will become dry, you will be able to go home.

Vomiting often lasts for 1-2 days  
Diarrhoea often lasts for 5-7 days

**Always wash your hands after any toileting or nappy changes.**

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**Most Children with Diarrhoea and vomiting get better very quickly, but some children can get worse . You need to regularly check your child and follow the advice below.**

Most Children with Diarrhoea and Vomiting can be safely managed at home however:

- If your child is younger than 1 year
- If you child had a low birth weight
- Or you have a concern about looking after your child at home



You need advice please phone NHS Direct on 111  
[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

You can also contact your Health Visitor or Children's Centre or A&E

If your child

- appears to get worse or if you are worried
- is not drinking
- has signs of dehydration such as a dry mouth, not passed urine(had a wee) in the last 12 hours, unusually sleepy or sunken eyes
- has blood in the stool (poo)
- has had 6 or more bouts of diarrhoea in 24 hours
- has 3 or more vomits in 24 hours



You need to see the nurse or doctor today.

Please ring your GP surgery or attend A&E

If your child has signs of dehydration and

- becomes unresponsive
- has unusually pale or mottled skin
- has cold extremities
- is breathing faster than usual



**You need urgent help  
Please phone 999 or go to the nearest  
Accident and  
Emergency**

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**Most Children with Diarrhoea and vomiting get better very quickly, but some children can get worse . You need to regularly check your child and follow the advice below.**

**HOW TO MANAGER YOUR CHILD AT HOME**

- Diarrhoea can often last between 5 and 7 days
- Continue to offer your child their usual feeds, including breast or other milk feeds
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids and offer small amounts often
- Do not give fizzy drinks and/or fruit juices
- You may be advised to give an Oral Rehydration Solution i.e. Dioralyte
- If your child has other symptoms like a high temperature, neck stiffness, or rash please ask for advice from a health care professional
- Your child may have stomach cramps, if simple painkillers do not help please seek further advice
- Please remember to wash your hands and your child's hands with soap and hot water before eating or drinking and after every vomit or loose stool
- Do not share towels with a child who is vomiting or has diarrhoea
- Children should not return to school or nursery/child care for 72 hours following an episode of vomiting or diarrhoea
- Children should not go swimming for 2 weeks
- If your child is due routine immunisations please discuss this with your GP or practice nurse, these may not need to be delayed.



**This booklet will not answer all your questions or give all the information you would like, so please ask questions as professionals are always willing to help. You can contact your child's consultant paediatrician via their secretary, or Nightingale Ward:**

**Telephone 01246 512324 or  
01246 512328**



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