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Vomiting (Treatment)

What's the best way to treat vomiting?

In most cases, vomiting will stop without specific medical treatment. You should never use over-the-counter or prescription remedies unless they've been specifically prescribed by your pediatrician for your child and for this particular illness.

When your infant or young child is vomiting, keep her lying on her stomach or side as much as possible. Doing this will minimize the chances of her inhaling vomit into her upper airway and lungs.

Watch for dehydration

When there is continued vomiting, you need to make certain that dehydration doesn't occur. Dehydration is a term used when the body loses so much water that it can no longer function efficiently. If allowed to reach a severe degree, it can be serious and life-threatening. To prevent this from happening, make sure your child consumes enough extra fluids to restore what has been lost through throwing up. If she vomits these fluids, notify your pediatrician.

Modify your child's diet

For the first twenty-four hours or so of any illness that causes vomiting, keep your child off solid foods, and encourage her to suck or drink clear fluids, such as water, sugar water (1.2 teaspoon [2.5 ml] sugar in 4 ounces [120 ml] of water), Popsicles, gelatin water (1 teaspoon [5 ml] of flavored gelatin in 4 ounces of water), or preferably an electrolyte solution (ask your pediatrician which one), instead of eating. Liquids not only help to prevent dehydration, but also are less likely than solid foods to stimulate further vomiting.

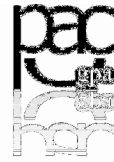
Here are some guidelines to follow for giving your child fluids after she has vomited.

1. Wait for two to three hours after the last vomiting episode, and then give 1 to 2 ounces (30-60 ml) of cool water every half hour to one hour for four feedings.
2. If she retains this, give 2 ounces (60 ml) of electrolyte solution alternated with 2 ounces of clear liquids every half hour.
3. If this is retained for two feedings, add half-strength formula or milk (depending on age), and continue increasing the quantity slowly to 3 to 4 ounces (90-120 ml) every three or four hours. After twelve to twenty-four hours with no additional vomiting, gradually return your child to her normal diet, but continue to give her plenty of clear fluids.

In most cases, your child will just need to stay at home and receive a liquid diet for twelve to twenty-four hours. Your pediatrician usually won't prescribe a drug to treat the vomiting.



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Vomiting (Treatment) cont...

If your child also has diarrhea, ask your pediatrician for instructions on giving liquids and restoring solids to her diet.

When to call the pediatrician

If she can't retain any clear liquids or if the symptoms become more severe, notify your pediatrician. She will examine your child and may order blood and urine tests or X rays to make a diagnosis. Occasionally hospital care may be necessary.

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Please note: These guidelines are not meant to diagnose any condition, or treat any condition not diagnosed by a physician. They are provided for general information only. If you are concerned about your child's condition, call a physician or 911 immediately.