

# Gastroenteritis

## What is it?

An inflammation of your stomach and intestines.

## Symptoms:

- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal cramps
- Low-grade fever (sometimes)

Depending on the cause of the inflammation, symptoms may last from one day to more than a week.

## Plan of Action:

- **Sip liquids**, such as a sports drink or water, to prevent dehydration. Drinking fluids too quickly can worsen the nausea and vomiting, so try to take small frequent sips over a couple of hours, instead of drinking a large amount at once.
- **Take note of urination.** You should be urinating at regular intervals, and your urine should be light and clear. Infrequent passage of dark urine is a sign of dehydration. Dizziness and lightheadedness also are signs of dehydration. If any of these signs and symptoms occur and you can't drink enough fluids, seek medical attention.
- **Ease back into eating.** Try to eat small amounts of food frequently if you experience nausea. Otherwise, gradually begin to eat bland, easy-to-digest foods, such as soda crackers, toast, gelatin, bananas, applesauce,

rice and chicken. Stop eating if your nausea returns. Avoid milk and dairy products, caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, and fatty or highly seasoned foods for a few days.

- **Get plenty of rest.** The illness and dehydration can make you weak and tired.

## Seek medical attention if:

- Vomiting persists more than two days
- Diarrhea persists more than several days
- Diarrhea turns bloody
- Fever is more than 102 F (39 C) or higher
- Lightheadedness or fainting occurs with standing
- Confusion develops
- Worrisome abdominal pain develops

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