



Health Fact Sheet: Diarrhoea and Vomiting (Gastro-Intestinal Illness)

What Causes Diarrhoea and Vomiting?

Diarrhoea and vomiting is caused by a number of different organisms, including bacteria, viruses and parasites. One of the most common reasons for a child suffering from diarrhea and vomiting is something called rotavirus gastroenteritis, which is very contagious. Diarrhoea and vomiting can also occur if a child has a cold or flu, ear infections, throat/chest infections or runs high fevers.

What are the signs to look out for if my child is dehydrated?

- Less frequency in passing urine
- Lethargy
- Cold to touch
- Irritable
- Faster/slower breathing
- Dry mouth/tongue and lips • Drink little and often.
- If they cannot keep fluid down, let them rest and try again later.
- Water is easier for the stomach to handle if it is not ice cold.
- If it is an older child that is sick, try to refrain from giving them milk.
- If diarrhoea and/or vomiting continue for several days, then please consult your doctor.

How are gastro-intestinal illnesses transmitted?

- Eating contaminated foods.
- Drinking contaminated water.
- Poor personal hygiene.
- Contact with infected items such as bed clothes and sheets.
- Infrequent hand washing.

How are Gastro-intestinal illnesses treated?

- Encourage your child to wash their hands thoroughly after going to the toilet and before eating
- Children to be cared for at home and isolated from school.
- Do not allow your child to return to school until 24 hours have passed since their last episode of diarrhoea and vomiting.
- Most children will improve without medications or specific treatment.
- Rest is important.
- Children must drink plenty of fluids in order to not become dehydrated.
- You can buy replacement electrolyte sachets, to re-hydrate the body and give it essential salts and energy.

Note: According to DHA- Diarrhoea cases exclusion from school until diarrhea ceases.