

Gastroenteritis Advice Sheet (Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting)

Name of child:

Age:

Date/Time advice given:

Further advice/Follow-up:

Name of professional:

Signature of professional:



Red

If your child:

- becomes difficult to rouse/unresponsive
- becomes pale and floppy
- is finding it difficult to breathe

You need urgent help.
Please phone 999 or go straight to the nearest Accident and Emergency Department.



Amber

If your child:

- is under 3 months old OR has diabetes
- seems **dehydrated** i.e. dry mouth, sunken eyes, no tears, sunken fontanelle (soft spot on baby's head), drowsy or passing less urine than normal.
- has stopped drinking or breastfeeding AND/OR is unable to keep down recommended fluids
- has blood in the stool (poo) OR constant tummy pain
- becomes irritable or lethargic OR their breathing is rapid or deep
- persistent vomiting AND/OR large diarrhoea and/or no wet nappy for more than 12 hours
- has cold feet and hands

You need to contact a doctor or nurse today.
Please ring your GP surgery or call NHS 111 – dial 111.



Green

If none of the above features are present, most children with Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting can be safely managed at home.

N.B. Some children are more likely to become dehydrated including: children younger than 1 year old or if they had a low birth weight. In these cases or if you still have concerns about your child please contact your GP surgery or call NHS – dial 111).

Most children with diarrhoea and/or vomiting get better very quickly, but some children can get worse. You need to regularly check your child and follow the advice given to you by your healthcare professional and/or as listed on this sheet.

Self Care.
Using the advice overleaf you can provide the care your child needs at home.

Useful information

Children under the weather?

Search 'Catch app' to download a free NHS local health app for parents and carers of children from pregnancy to age 5.



For more information visit
www.catchapp.co.uk or
[@catchapp_uk](https://twitter.com/catchapp_uk)



Common Approach To Children's Health



Your Pharmacist

Pharmacists can offer advice and medicines for a range of minor illnesses and most have a room where you can discuss issues with pharmacy staff without being overheard and are trained to tell you when your symptoms mean you need to see a doctor.

To find your local pharmacy and open times visit
www.sthelenscares.co.uk



Need medical advice or help right now?

CALL
111

Use the NHS 111 service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not a life-threatening situation. You can also access 111 online at: www.111.nhs.uk

Trained advisors are available 24 hours a day and can book you an appointment at the Urgent Treatment Centre, order a repeat prescription or put you in touch with a healthcare professional.

Gastroenteritis Advice Sheet (Diarrhoea and/or Vomiting)

About Gastroenteritis

Severe diarrhoea and / or vomiting can lead to dehydration, which is when the body does not have enough water or the right balance of salts to carry out its normal functions. If the dehydration becomes severe it can be dangerous. Children at increased risk of dehydration include: young babies under 1 year old (and especially the under 6 months), those born at a low birth weight, those who have stopped drinking or breastfeeding during the illness and children with malnutrition or with faltering growth.

How can I look after my child?

- If your child has other symptoms like a high temperature, neck stiffness or rash please ask for advice from a health care professional.
- Diarrhoea can often last between 5 – 7 days and stops within 2 weeks. Vomiting does not usually last for more than 3 days. If your child continues to be ill longer than these periods, seek advice.
- Continue to offer your child their usual feeds, including breast or other milk feeds.
- Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids – little and often. Water is not enough and ideally Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS) is best eg. Dioralyte. ORS can be purchased over the counter at large supermarkets and pharmacies and can help prevent dehydration from occurring.
- Mixing the contents of the ORS sachet in dilute squash (not “sugar-free” squash) instead of water may improve the taste.
- Do not worry if your child is not interested in solid food, but offer food if hungry.
- Don't give your child fizzy drinks and/or fruit juices as they can make diarrhoea worse.
- Your child may have stomach cramps; if simple painkillers do not help please seek further advice.
- If your child is due routine immunisations please discuss this with your GP or practice nurse, as they may not need to be delayed.
- **Hand washing is the best way to stop gastroenteritis spreading.**

After Care

Once your child is rehydrated and no longer vomiting:

- Reintroduce the child's usual food.
- If dehydration recurs, start giving ORS again.
- Anti-diarrhoeal medicines (also called Antimotility drugs) should not be given to children.

Preventing the spread of Gastroenteritis (diarrhoea and / or vomiting):



You and/or your child should wash your hands with soap (liquid if possible) in warm running water and then dry them carefully:

- After going to the toilet
- After changing nappies
- Before touching food



Your child should not:

- Share his or her towels with anyone
- Go to school or any other childcare facility until 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea and / or vomiting
- Swim in swimming pools until 2 weeks after the diarrhoea has stopped

