

DIARRHEA

Diarrhea is characterized by loose, watery bowel movements occurring frequently throughout the day. It may be an acute attack, coming on suddenly and lasting 24-48 hours, or chronic, occurring over a long period of time.

Common causes of diarrhea include:

- Viral and bacterial infections
- Food poisoning
- Food intolerances
- Stress/tension
- Medications, e.g., antibiotics
- Diseases of the stomach, small intestine, and large intestine.



In an acute case of diarrhea, the most important step is to consume fluids in small amounts throughout the day. Use of anti-diarrheal agents is not recommended as this may prolong the course of the illness.

The recommended foods for the first 12 hours include:

- Weak tea
- Clear fruit juices (cranberry, grape) or fruit drinks
- Clear broth
- Carbonated beverages (ginger ale, 7-up)
- Flavored gelatin
- Honey
- Sugar
- Popsicles
- Fruit ice



Once these foods are well tolerated, progress slowly to a soft, easily digested diet, e.g., soft-cooked eggs, crackers, poultry, fish, cooked vegetables, canned fruits, and refined breads, cereals, pastas.

Examination by a physician or nurse practitioner is recommended for those who suffer from frequent bouts of diarrhea or have symptoms such as: rectal bleeding or pain, mucus/pus in the stool, abdominal pain, or diarrhea lasting greater than three days.

Appointments: 486-2719
24 Hour On Call: 486-4700