

# when children get STOMACH BUGS

## 1 STOMACH BUGS

Stomach bugs (gastroenteritis) cause stomach cramps, vomiting, stomach pain and runny poos (diarrhoea) and can last up to 10 days. Children who get a stomach bug can lose a lot of fluid from vomiting and diarrhoea. Even if they aren't thirsty it's important for them to drink something to help their body recover.

## 2 WHAT CAN MY CHILD DRINK?

If you are breast-feeding, continue to feed your baby. Even if your child can't hold anything down try to give them something to drink. They may need to be fed more often. Do not give them fizzy drinks, baby formula, sports drinks or energy drinks until they stop vomiting.

- Oral rehydration solution – Talk to your chemist or pharmacist about drinks designed to help children replace the fluid they have lost.
- Fruit juice or cordial.

*See the next page for a guide on how much your child should drink*

## 3 IF THEY'RE HUNGRY

While they recover it's more important for your child to drink than to eat. It may take a little while for them to feel like eating. When they do, give them something plain to eat such as bread or toast.

## 4 KEEP THEM AT HOME

Usually children start to feel better after a few days. Keep them at home for at least two days after vomiting and diarrhoea has stopped.

This will stop the bug from spreading to their friends and schoolmates.



## 5 PROTECT YOURSELF & YOUR FAMILY

You can prevent stomach bugs spreading to your family by washing your hands after cleaning up vomit or poos, after going to the toilet, handling food and before eating or drinking.

Do not share food or drinks. Wash your sick children's dirty clothes, sheets and towels separately in hot water.



## 6 SEEING YOUR DOCTOR

**Make an appointment for your child to see a doctor the same day:**

- Their mouth and tongue are dry.
- Their eyes are sunken.
- They are unusually tired and don't have much energy.
- Their hands or feet feel cold to touch.
- They have not passed as much urine (wee) as usual.

## 7 TAKE YOUR CHILD TO YOUR DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY IF:

- They are unusually sleepy and difficult to wake up
- They have blood or mucus in their poo
- Their vomiting gets worse and they cannot keep their fluids down
- They have severe stomach pain
- They have frequent diarrhoea
- They are under six months old

**If your doctor is not available go to your nearest After Hours Clinic or Emergency Department.**

## 8 KEEP THEIR FLUIDS UP

If your child is vomiting or has diarrhoea they will lose a lot of nutrients and fluids. It is important to give them frequent, small drinks. (Consider using a syringe to give fluids).

The best options are:

- an oral rehydration solution from the chemist or pharmacist.
- dilute some fruit juice or cordial in water (1 part juice to 5 parts water)

Keep a record of your child's fluid intake and output and take it with you if you need to go to your doctor.

Use the table to guide you to how much they need to drink every 5 minutes.

For example: if they are one year old give them 10mls every 5 minutes.

## HOW MUCH TO GIVE THEM

Age	Amount (ml) every 5 mins
3 months	5
6 months	7.5
1 year	10
3 years	15
5 years	20
7 years	25
10 years	40
14 years	50

**Note: 1 teaspoon = 5ml**

## 9 TRACKING WHAT THEY DRINK

Use this table to track how much your child has to drink. After 3 hours your child should feel well enough to drink normally.

Tick the box for each time they drink & use a cross when they don't. Take this record with you if your child goes to the doctor.

If your child keeps vomiting complete section 10 and then see your doctor.

Hour 1	Hour 2	Hour 3
<input type="checkbox"/> 5 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 mins
<input type="checkbox"/> 10 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> 10 mins
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<input type="checkbox"/> 60 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 mins

## 10 LOST FLUIDS

Before you see your GP complete the following form (remember to take this with you).

### Vomiting

Have they thrown up in the last 3 hours?

- No
- Once
- 2 to 4 times
- 4 times or more

How much did they throw up?

- A little
- A lot

### Urine (wee)

How many times have they had a wee in the last 3 hours?

- They have not
- Once
- 2 to 4 times
- 4 times or more

### Diarrhoea (runny poos)

How often have they had diarrhoea in the last 3 hours?

- No diarrhoea
- Once
- 2 to 4 times
- 4 times or more

You can call your GP for help. If they are closed you'll be put through to a helpline for advice.

Alternatively call Healthline: 0800 611 116