



Caring for a Vomiting Infant or Child

What should I do for Vomiting?

Vomiting is forceful throwing up. A virus is often the cause of vomiting. Being overexcited, eating too much or too fast, or being extremely upset can also cause a child to vomit. Vomiting can cause your child's body to lose too much fluid and they may become easily dehydrated. It is important to see that your child drinks plenty of fluids even if they have or are vomiting. The secret is giving them small amounts on a frequent basis. Do not worry if your child won't eat. They will eat when they feel better. The most important thing is to make sure your child does not become dehydrated.

The fluids of choice are electrolyte replacement solutions. These solutions are; Pedialyte, Infalyte, or Breast Milk for infants, and Pedialyte, Infalyte, or Pedialyte Popsicles.

If your infant is breastfeeding, offer them breast milk more frequently for shorter periods of time.

- Do not offer your child anything to eat or drink for fifteen to twenty minutes after they vomit to let their stomach rest. Then start giving your child one teaspoon to one tablespoon of clear liquid every 5 minutes. Every hour they keep fluids down you may increase the amount of fluid offered.
- Once your child has tolerated clear liquids for about 6 hours, you can start to try small amounts of formula or food, slowly increasing the amount if they appear to be feeling better.
- If or when you are increasing the amount of liquid, your child begins to vomit, you should re-start the entire process with small amounts of clear liquids.
- Avoid fluids that have a lot of sugar (i.e. Soda Pop, Jell-o, Sports drinks, etc...) as they can worsen or even cause diarrhea.
- You can start offering small amounts of solid foods or formula once your child or infant has not vomited for around 6 hours. Try to avoid spicy or greasy foods for a few days.

Things to watch for:

- 1) A child who vomits after a hard fall or blow to the head (see concussion procedures).
- 2) A child who vomits up blood, green, or black fluid. (seek medical attention immediately).
- 3) Remember to look for signs of dehydration: no urination or wet diapers for up to 12 hours, no tears when crying, dry mouth and tongue, your child is overly confused (out of character), or your child is harder than normal to awaken.

When should I call Idaho Falls Pediatrics?

Should your child continue to vomit after you have given small sips or doses of clear liquid, remember to let your child's stomach rest for at least 15 minutes prior to introducing small amounts of liquid. If they continue to vomit for more than 12 hours and you become worried about the prolonged vomiting seek medical attention.

**NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call 911 or call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.*