

Idaho Falls Pediatrics

Hiccups

What are hiccups?

Hiccups are strange gulping sounds caused by involuntary sudden contractions (spasms) of the diaphragm. The diaphragm is a dome-shaped muscle at the bottom of the chest.

Hiccups often accompany indigestion or having an over-full stomach from overeating that presses against the diaphragm. A child may have hiccups after drinking too much soda.

How can I take care of my child?

Give 1 teaspoon of dry granulated sugar to your child and have him swallow it quickly. If this doesn't work the first time, repeat it 3 times at 2-minute intervals. Babies can be given a swallow of water. The child should also lie down.

If this doesn't work, gag your child 1 or 2 times by pushing down on the back of the tongue with the handle of a spoon or a toothbrush.

Other ways to cause gagging are rubbing the uvula or soft palate with a cotton swab, or pulling the tongue outward with the fingers.

When should I call Idaho Falls Pediatrics?

Call IMMEDIATELY if:

The hiccups last more than 3 hours (the usual time needed to empty the stomach) and your child is uncomfortable.

*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.