

# Diarrhea



### Your child has diarrhea.

A person with diarrhea has frequent, loose or watery stools (bowel movements). Your child might also have cramps and/or nausea and vomiting. Certain medicines, changes in diet or germs might cause diarrhea.

Many cases of diarrhea are caused by germs that might be spread between family members. There are some things that you can do at home to keep other family members from becoming sick with diarrhea.

### Things to do at home:

- Wash your hands and your child's hands! Hand washing prevents the spread of germs.
- No one who has diarrhea should prepare food for other members of the family.
- Wash your hands when preparing food and after using the bathroom. Teach your child to wash his or her hands also.
- Clean your bathroom and kitchen using a disinfectant that will kill bacteria and viruses.
- Clean toys a sick child may have played with using a disinfectant that will kill bacteria and viruses. Cloth or other washable soft toys may be washed on a "High" or "Hot" setting.

### Caring for your child when your child has diarrhea

- Give your child plenty of liquids, to replace the liquids lost with the diarrhea. Your child's healthcare provider may tell you to offer oral rehydration solutions such as Pedialyte®, Ceralyte® or Oralyte®. Water is good if your child is not vomiting. Sometimes a child will take liquids better if they are frozen or slushy and can be eaten with a spoon. Your child may take Pedialyte Freezer Pops® or ice chips.

If your child is not throwing up (vomiting), he or she can eat most foods that are **not fatty or sweet**. Examples of **foods TO give** your child are:

- Rice, wheat and oat cereals
- Plain crackers or bread
- Yogurt
- Vegetables
- Fresh or canned fruits, especially bananas or applesauce
- Soups made with vegetables and starches, such as vegetable soup with rice
- Chicken (boiled or baked) with the skin removed

To avoid making the diarrhea worse and until your child is well, **do NOT give** your child:

- Milk or Fruit Juice
- Greasy foods, such as hamburgers, french fries or pizza
- Butter or gravy
- High sugar foods or drinks, such as sodas or sweet tea

Contact your child's healthcare provider if any of the following occur:

- The diarrhea has blood or mucus in it, or the bowel movements look black
- The diarrhea lasts for more than 3 days
- Your child has very bad stomach pain
- Your child is not urinating as much as usual
- Your child's mouth and eyes look dry
- Your child has a temperature that is 101 °F or higher by mouth or 100 °F or higher under the arm.
- Your child is also vomiting
- Your child acts like he or she feels very bad

**Information from DHEC's Child Care and School Exclusion Lists: In certain situations, children with diarrhea may be excluded from childcare or school until the diarrhea has stopped or a health care provider determines the child is well enough to return. For additional information about exclusion when a child has diarrhea, see the DHEC Child Care and School Exclusion Lists of Contagious or Communicable Diseases at [www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/exclusion.htm](http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/exclusion.htm)**

**Brand names used in this document are only meant to be examples. SC DHEC does not endorse any of the brand names in this document.**

<p>Child's Name _____</p> <p>School Nurse _____</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>School _____</p> <p>School Phone Number ( _____ ) _____</p>
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