

Description

Diarrhea is an increase in the frequency and/or liquidity of bowel movements. It results from a decrease in water absorption in the intestinal tract, increased water secretion, contaminated food, water or food surfaces. Viruses, bacteria, toxins, stress and sometimes parasites or other intestinal disorders can cause this reaction. This type of symptom usually lasts from a few days to up to 10-14 days. For longer bouts of diarrhea, consult your medical provider immediately. Tests may be performed for severe cases to determine the cause.

For more information:

Student Health & Wellness Center.....707-654-1170

Visit Our Website at <http://www.csum.edu/web/campus-life/student-center/student-health-center>

24-hr Nurse Advice Line (Med Call).....800-877-0027

Special Thanks to San Diego State University

California Maritime Academy
Student Health & Wellness Center
200 Maritime Academy Drive
Vallejo, Ca 94590

Phone: 707-654-1170
Fax: 707-654-1171
E-mail: healthcenter@csum.edu



Diarrhea



California Maritime Academy

A campus of the California State University



Diarrhea

Treatment

- Keep hydrated with lots of low-sugar, low sodium fluids.
- Eat and take fluids a few sips at a time, even if you feel nauseated. This will help shorten the duration of the diarrhea.
- Follow the B.R.A.T Diet

B.R.A.T Diet

For the first 8-12 hours:

Clear liquids in small amounts (sips), frequently:

7-up/Sprite (flat) apple or pear juice
Herbal tea gelatin
Chicken broth bouillon
Gatorade/Procarri

For the NEXT 12-24 hours, if improved, you may add to the above:

Plain white rice white toast w/ jelly
Cooked rice cereal saltine crackers
Bananas apple sauce
Canned pears or peaches
Clear soups (not cream soups)

Next 24 hours, if improvement continues and your stools are formed and firm, you may add:

Boiled chicken
Egg (poached or scrambled)
Lean beef (baked, broiled, or boiled)
Cooked carrots, green peas, green beans
NO broccoli, cabbage, brussels sprouts or beans

DO NOT EAT these foods until you have had either normal BM's or no BM for 24 hours:

Raw, fried or spicy foods Citrus fruits or juices
Bran/whole grains Caffeinated beverages
Alcohol Candy

If stools continue to be firm, you may gradually return to your regular diet. Milk and dairy products should be the last foods added to your diet.

What about medications?

Any medication that slows down the emptying of the bowel may delay recovery. Hence, anti-diarrhea medications are not always prescribed. Antibiotics are used even less frequently. The dietary methods mentioned above usually alleviate symptoms and get the intestinal tract back in-line. Even diarrhea caused by a specific bacterium will usually be better treated by natural means rather than medication.

Any over-the-counter medication like Pepto-Bismol 2 tablespoon dose can be taken every 1/2 to 1 hour as needed. Do not exceed 8 doses in 24 hours. Note that this medication may discolor the stool a dark-brownish black.

When are special tests required?

Special tests may be ordered if:

Your history suggests contact with a specific parasite, bacteria or virus. This may occur after foreign travel, a camping trip or when friends or other members of your family become ill at the same time as you.

You have a fever of 102 degrees or more or have bloody mucous in your stool.

Your symptoms persist beyond 7-14 days without improvement, or earlier if vomiting, dehydration, persistent fever, severe abdominal pain and weight loss occur.