

# How To Deal With Diarrhea

## Signs of Diarrhea

Signs of diarrhea include:

- an increased frequency of bowel movements
- loose, watery bowel movements.

## How To Manage Diarrhea

- Drink plenty of liquids (about 8 to 10 large glasses a day).
- Do not just drink water. Water by itself will not replace the minerals or calories your body has lost. Try adding mild, clear liquids such as apple juice, weak tea, broth, Popsicles®, ginger ale, Gatorade® or sports drinks every day.
- Avoid milk or milk products if they make the diarrhea worse.
- Avoid high-fiber foods which can irritate your intestines, such as:
  - bran
  - nuts and seeds
  - whole-grain breads and cereals
  - popcorn
  - fresh and dried fruits
  - beans
  - raw or cooked vegetables.
- Eat low-fiber foods to help rest your bowel, such as:
  - white bread and toast
  - bananas
  - white rice or noodles
  - applesauce
  - eggs
  - fish
  - mashed potatoes
  - yogurt
  - cottage cheese.
- Avoid fried, greasy or fatty foods.
- Avoid spicy foods.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol and sweets.
- Eat smaller meals more often.
- Serve foods cold or at room temperature. Hot foods and drinks make the diarrhea worse.
- Take anti-diarrhea medicines as directed.
- Include foods high in potassium, such as:
  - bananas
  - meats
  - applesauce
  - breads
  - potatoes
  - cheese
  - gelatin
  - avocados
  - mushrooms.

**(over)**

- If the diarrhea is severe, rest your bowel by having only clear liquids until the diarrhea stops, then slowly return to eating as you usually do.
- Keep your rectal area clean and dry to keep your skin from breaking down.
- Consider using an over-the-counter skin barrier after each bowel movement.
- Keep a record of your stools every day. Your health care provider can use this to help evaluate your treatment.

Diarrhea, if severe enough, can delay your treatment and decrease your quality of life. Tell your health care provider if you are having any problems and begin some of the tips for managing diarrhea listed above right away.

Ask your health care provider if you have any more questions about diarrhea caused by your treatment.

## **When To Call Your Health Care Provider**

Call your health care provider if you have:

- loose stools (more than four in 1 day)
- sudden, severe onset of abdominal pain
- fever or dizziness along with the diarrhea.