

## Call the doctor if your child:

- Has blood in the vomit (or vomit looks like “coffee grounds”).
- Has vomit that is dark green or pea-colored.
- Is projectile vomiting (vomiting across the room).
- Has repeated, forceful vomiting, usually in infants (more than just spitting up).
- Is vomiting for longer than 24 hours.
- Has had a recent fall or head injury.
- Is acting confused or lethargic.
- Can’t keep clear fluids down or is showing signs of dehydration.
- Has maroon or bloody bowel movements.
- Has severe abdominal pain.

Remember, most practices have a doctor on call during the times the office isn’t open. Call the office’s main number for information.



Call

## Dehydration

Dehydration occurs when the body doesn’t have enough water to function properly. A child’s body can quickly lose a lot of water and salt through vomiting or diarrhea, especially if the child is not drinking enough because she does not feel well. Some signs that your child is becoming dehydrated are:

- Your child isn’t peeing as often as usual (needs fewer diaper changes or trips to the bathroom).
- Your child’s urine is a darker color than usual and has a strong smell.
- Your child’s breathing and heartbeat are faster than normal (put the palm of your hand on your child’s chest to feel the heartbeat).
- The soft spot on your baby’s head is sunken in.
- Your child’s mouth and tongue look dry or cracked.
- Your child is crying, but you do not see any tears.
- Your child is acting confused or doesn’t know where he/she is.

If your child has any of these signs of dehydration, call your child’s doctor.

## What can I do if my child is vomiting?

1. Watch for signs of dehydration when she has stopped vomiting.
2. Offer small amounts of clear fluids for 8 hours (no solid food or milk).
  - For infants less than one year:
    - Pedialyte® (ask your doctor how much to give)
  - For children older than one year:
    - Apple or white grape juice, Gatorade®, popsicles, and Pedialyte® are good options.
    - Start slowly. Give her 1-2 tablespoons of fluid every half-hour.
    - Once she has kept these liquids down for 2-3 hours without vomiting, you can give increasing amounts of fluids.
3. Offer bland, soft foods after 8 hours without vomiting.
  - For infants 6 months to one year:
    - Give cereal and progress slowly back to a normal feeding schedule.
  - For children older than one year:
    - Start with bland foods such as crackers and progress to a normal diet within 24 hours.

## The Facts:

Vomiting (“throwing up,” “stomach flu”) is very common in childhood and is usually caused by a virus. A viral stomach illness typically causes vomiting and diarrhea, and lasts 24-48 hours (but can last longer). Children will sometimes have a slightly elevated temperature.

Viral stomach illnesses usually go away on their own with time, rest, and plenty of fluids. It is important for your child to drink lots of liquids when she is feeling ill and vomiting. Children lose a lot of water and salts with vomiting and diarrhea, which can lead to dehydration.