



A message from the HEALTH CENTER

As you may know, there is a virus going around the community and elsewhere, here's some information about the stomach flu.

What is gastroenteritis?

Gastroenteritis or stomach flu is an inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract involving the stomach, intestines or both. It is often caused by the Norovirus family and it is very contagious.

How can I get infected by the stomach flu?

- By eating food that has been contaminated by the virus or by not using appropriated measures of hygiene with food products.
- By being in close contact with someone who is infected.
- By touching an object or an area that has been previously infected and then putting your hands in your mouth.

What are the symptoms?

- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Headache
- May or may not have mild fever

How long does it last?

This illness lasts about 1 to 5 days

What are the treatments?

The goal is to prevent dehydration caused by vomiting and diarrhea. The infants and elders are more at risk of dehydration. The electrolytes and fluids lost by vomiting and by diarrhea need to be replaced. You can take PEDIALYTE ®, or Gastrolyte ® but Pedialyte ® is more recommended.

If you can't go to the pharmacy you can do this recipe but you need to **respect the amount of milliliters or ounces really CAREFULLY** or this could be dangerous. This recipe is temporary, **not for a long term use** and **as soon as you can** go to the pharmacy to buy Pedialyte ® .

360ml / 12 oz of orange juice no sugar added

600ml / 20 oz of boiled water (1 minute)

2.5ml / ½ tea spoon of salt

Sports drink like Gatorade, soda pop and juice **do not** replace the electrolytes lost because of the illness. These contain too much sugar.

When you are starting to feel better you can try eating the BRAT diet, which stands for: Banana, white Rice, Applesauce (sugar free) and dry white Toast or crackers. Avoid spicy food, alcohol, coffee and fatty foods for 3 days after all the symptoms have disappeared.

You should know that antibiotics do not work on viruses, and that antidiarrheal medications are usually not given because they might prolong the illness.

Resting is also one of the treatments.

How can I prevent it?

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly (30 seconds).
- Handling food properly, meaning washing all fruits and vegetables and cleaning counters before and after cooking.
- Clean and disinfect contaminating areas after vomiting or having diarrhea.

When do I need to see a doctor?

Rarely someone with gastroenteritis needs to see a doctor. But you need to see a doctor if you have one of these symptoms.

- If the infant didn't wet a diaper for more than 3 hours
- Blood in the stool
- Faintness
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- High fever
- Vomiting more than 24 hours (especially in young children)

If you have any questions, you can call us or Info-Sante 8-1-1. It would be a pleasure to answer you to the best of our knowledge.

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