Diet for Diarrhea, Infants and Children

Having watery poop (*diarrhea*) has many causes. Certain foods and drinks may make diarrhea worse. Feed your infant or child the right foods when he or she has diarrhea. It is easy for a child with diarrhea to lose too much fluid from the body (*dehydration*). Fluids that are lost need to be replaced. Make sure your child drinks enough water and fluids to keep the pee clear or pale yellow.

HOME CARE

For infants:

- Feed infants breast milk or full-strength formula as usual.
- You **do not** need to change to a lactose-free or soy formula. Only do so if your infant's doctor tells you to.
- Oral rehydration solutions (ORS) may be used if your doctor says it is okay. Infants should **not** be given juice, sports drinks, or soda or pop. These drinks can make diarrhea worse.
- If your infant eats baby food, choose rice, peas, potatoes, chicken, or cooked eggs.

For children:

- Feed your child a healthy, balanced diet as usual.
- Foods and drinks that are okay when your child has diarrhea are:
  - Starchy foods, such as rice, toast, pasta, low-sugar cereal, oatmeal, grits, baked potatoes, crackers, and bagels.
  - Low-fat milk (for children over 2 years of age).
  - Bananas.
  - Applesauce.
- **Do not** eat fats and sweets until the diarrhea lessens.
- ORS may be used if your doctor says it is okay.
- You may make your own ORS. Follow this recipe:
  - 1/2 teaspoon table salt.
  - 3/4 teaspoon baking soda.
  - 1/3 teaspoon salt substitute (*potassium chloride*).
  - 1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon sugar.
  - 1 quart of water.

GET HELP RIGHT AWAY IF:

- Your child has a temperature by mouth above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**
- Your child cannot keep fluids down.
- Your child throws up (*vomits*) many times.
- Belly (*abdominal*) pain develops, gets worse, or stays in one place.
- Diarrhea has blood or mucus in it.
- Your child feels weak, dizzy, faint, or is very thirsty.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Watch your child's condition.
- Get help right away if your child is not doing well or gets worse.

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