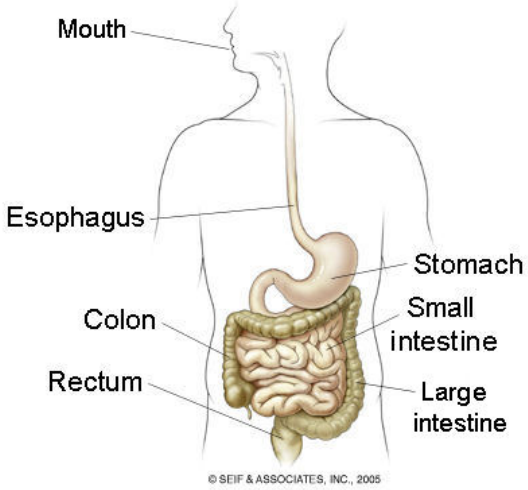
Gastrointestinal Bleeding (GI Bleeding)
(Bleeding from the Stomach, and/or Small Bowel, and/or Large Bowel/Colon)

Gastrointestinal (GI) bleeding is bleeding from the gut or any place between your mouth and anus. If bleeding is slow, you may be allowed to go home. If there is a lot of bleeding, hospitalization and observation are often required.



SYMPTOMS
- You vomit bright red blood or material that looks like coffee grounds.
- You have blood in your stools or the stools look black and tarry.

DIAGNOSIS
Your caregiver may diagnose your condition by taking a history and a physical exam. More tests may be needed, including:
- X-rays.
- EGD (*esophagogastroduodenoscopy*), which looks at your esophagus, stomach, and small bowel through a flexible telescope-like instrument.
- Colonoscopy, which looks at your colon/large bowel through a flexible telescope-like instrument.
- Biopsies, which remove a small sample of tissue to examine under a microscope.

FINDING OUT THE RESULTS OF YOUR TEST
Not all test results are available during your visit. If your test results are not back during the visit, make an appointment with your caregiver to find out the results. Do not assume everything is normal if you have not heard from your caregiver or the medical facility. It is important for you to follow up on all of your test results.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS
- Follow instructions as suggested by your caregiver regarding medicines. **Do not** take aspirin, drink alcohol, or take medicines for pain and arthritis unless your caregiver says it is okay.
- Get the suggested follow-up care when the tests are done.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:
- Your bleeding increases or you become lightheaded, weak, or pass out (*faint*).
- You experience severe cramps in your stomach, back, or belly (*abdomen*).
- You pass large clots.
- The problems which brought you in for medical care get worse.

MAKE SURE YOU:
- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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