Gastritis
(Vomiting, Upset Stomach)

Gastritis is an *inflammation* (the body's way of reacting to injury and/or infection) of the stomach. It is often caused by viral or *bacterial* (germ) infections. It can also be caused by chemicals (including alcohol) and medications. This illness may be associated with generalized *malaise* (feeling tired, not well), cramps, and fever. The illness may last two to seven days. If symptoms of gastritis continue, *gastroscopy* (looking into the stomach with a telescope-like instrument), *biopsy* (taking tissue sample), and/or blood tests may be necessary to determine the cause. **Antibiotics will not affect the illness unless there is a bacterial infection present.** One common bacterial cause of gastritis is an organism known as H. Pylori. This can be treated with antibiotics. Other forms of gastritis are caused by too much acid in the stomach. They can be treated with medications such as H2 blockers and antacids. Home treatment is usually all that is needed. Young children will quickly become *dehydrated* (loss of body fluids) if vomiting and diarrhea are both present. Medications may be given to control nausea. Medications are usually not given for diarrhea unless especially bothersome. Some medications slow the removal of the virus from the gastrointestinal tract. This slows down the healing process.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR **NAUSEA AND VOMITING**

- For adults: drink small amounts of fluids often. Drink at least 2 quarts a day. Take sips frequently. Do not drink large amounts of fluid at one time. This may worsen the nausea.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Drink clear liquids only. Those are anything you can see through such as water, broth, or soft drinks.
- Once you are keeping clear liquids down, you may start full liquids, soups, juices, and ice cream or sherbet. Slowly add bland (plain, not spicy) foods to your diet.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR **DIARRHEA**

Diarrhea can be caused by bacterial infections or a virus. Your condition should improve with time, rest, fluids, and/or anti-diarrheal medication.

Until your diarrhea is under control, you should drink clear liquids often in small amounts. Clear liquids include: water, broth, jell-o water and weak tea.

Avoid:

- Milk.
- Fruits.
- Tobacco.
- Alcohol.
- Extremely hot or cold fluids.
- Too much intake of anything at one time.

When your diarrhea stops you may add the following foods which help the stool to become more formed:

- Rice
- Bananas
- Apples without skin
- Dry toast

Once these foods are tolerated you may add low-fat yogurt and low-fat cottage cheese. They will help to restore the normal bacterial balance in your bowel.

Wash your hands well to avoid spreading *bacteria* (germ) or virus.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You are unable to keep fluids down.
- Vomiting or diarrhea become *persistent* (have again and again).

- Abdominal pain develops, or increases, or localizes. (Right sided pain can be appendicitis. Left sided pain in adults can be diverticulitis.)
- You develop a high fever (an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), or as your caregiver suggests) for over 3 days.
- Diarrhea becomes excessive or contains blood or mucous.
- You have excessive weakness, dizziness, fainting or extreme thirst.

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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