

Diarrhea

What is it?

- An increase in the amount of loose or liquid stools (poop).
- Diarrhea can happen from an infection or other reasons:

Infection <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many germs such as viruses, parasites and bacteria• Certain medications such as antibiotics	Other reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problems digesting food and drinks• Laxative use
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- Diarrhea sometimes happens with other symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, stomach pain or fever.
- Stool (poop) has to be tested to see if an infection is causing the diarrhea.
- If diarrhea continues for more than a few days, it can cause dehydration (fluid loss) and lead to serious health problems. Dehydration happens when your body loses too much fluid, important salts and minerals.

How is it spread?

- Diarrhea from infections is spread most often by putting something in your mouth that has been contaminated with the bowel movement (poop) of an infected person.
- Diarrhea for other reasons is not spread person-to-person.

Is there treatment for it?



- If you develop on-going problems with diarrhea, fever and/or stomach or abdominal pain
Seek medical attention; contact your doctor, Urgent Care or hospital Emergency Department.
- You want to prevent severe problems related to a possible infection. Tell the doctor that you were recently seen for diarrhea.
- Drink lots of fluids, rest and eat a well-balanced diet.
- Treatment depends on the reason for the diarrhea or the type of infection.

What can be done to prevent the spread of it?

- Clean your hands with hand sanitizer or soap and water well and often. Use soap and water if hands are visibly soiled or greasy.
- Take all medications as directed by your doctor or health care provider.
- If you are in the hospital, you may need to go into Contact Precautions (isolation).
- If you are at home:
 - clean your hands well and often
 - keep your bathroom and kitchen clean

Adherence to Infection Prevention and Control measures by staff and visitors is required to prevent spread of infection.

**Stop the spread of germs and infection.
Clean your hands.**



This fact sheet provides basic general information only and is to be used as a quick guide, not as a complete resource on the subject. If you have any further questions, ask Infection Prevention & Control or your health care provider.