

Gastroenteritis: Information for Students

Gastroenteritis or upset stomach can cause nausea/vomiting &/or diarrhoea. These symptoms may also be associated with stomach noises/pain/cramps, body aches, lack of energy & fever. It can be caused by viruses or bacteria, either by a gastric infection or food poisoning. It usually lasts a short duration & you start to feel a bit better within a few days. It is usually managed at home. Norovirus is a very common 'winter vomiting bug'. Food poisoning can be caused by bacteria such as campylobacter, salmonella, Escherichia Coli (E.Coli), listeria and clostridium as well as some forms of parasite.

What can you do to look after yourself:

1. Make sure you stay hydrated by sipping small amounts of water regularly. Keep a record of the amount of fluid you drink - aim for 2-3 litres in 24 hours.
 2. You can buy an oral rehydration sachet, such as Dioralyte, from any pharmacy.
 3. Take Paracetamol (as per instructions) for fever symptoms & aches and pains.
 4. If you don't feel like eating, try sucking boiled sweets, nibbling pieces of plain biscuit, drink clear soup and non-fizzy drinks.
 5. Prevent the spread of infection by good, regular hand washing & avoid sharing towels and tableware.
 6. Do not prepare or serve food for other people.
 7. Get plenty of rest while you are feeling unwell, don't try to carry on working or do sports.
 8. If nausea is troublesome try an anti-emetic from the pharmacy such as Buccastem M (Buccal).
 8. If diarrhoea is troublesome try medications from the pharmacy such as Loperamide.
 9. Let your friends, Peer supporters, Tutors or Welfare Officers know you are not well.
 10. Start eating again slowly, with small amounts of bland simple foods such as porridge, toast, soup, rice or banana.
 11. Do not attend Lectures and Tutorials until you have been symptom free for at least 48 hours.
- Please seek medical attention if: You have concerns about your symptoms. Your symptoms are prolonged. You have signs of dehydration. You have recently returned from foreign travel. You notice blood in your vomit or stool (poo). You have other long-term medical problems.

Signs of dehydration:

Dry tongue and lips, passing less urine than normal, passing dark concentrated urine, being irritable or lethargic, headaches.

Further Information <https://patient.info/health/diarrhoea/gastroenteritis>
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diarrhoea-and-vomiting/>