

## Stomach Flu

"Stomach flu" (also called gastro-enteritis) refers to stomach ache that may be associated with other symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever. There are many germs that can cause "stomach flu": most of them are viruses, and rarely bacteria or other microbes. The majority of these infections get better by themselves within 1-6 days, with appropriate home treatment.

### What you can do for common stomach flu:

- Put your stomach "to rest" by eating a bland diet, and gradually working back to your normal food intake. This is often referred as a "3-step diet": for the first 24-36 hours, have small but frequent intake of clear fluids and soft food only, such as soups and broths, mashed potatoes, rice, yogurt, or pudding; if that is tolerated, advanced to larger amounts and to more variety of bland, non spicy food of choice. If this is well tolerated for 1-2 days, then advance to a full diet.
- For infants and young children, it is very important to maintain adequate hydration. Do not force feed the child, but start with small frequent intake of fluids (depending on the age of the child, one can start with teaspoon to tablespoon size, or 1-2 ounces at a time of Pedilyte or other brands, or clear broth). Offer popsicles, Jello; If the child vomits, wait a little bit and try a small volume again. Avoid cow's milk for a few days. If your child is breast feeding, continue to do so.
- Medications are seldom necessary for stomach flu. They may interfere with the normal body mechanisms (such as vomiting or diarrhea) to "flush out" bad germs. If needed for comfort, adults can use Pepto-Bismol or Imodium for diarrhea, "Tums" or other antacids for indigestion. These are not recommended for young children.
- Wash your hands well after using the bathroom or after helping your child with bathroom functions.

### Get more medical advice or more specific treatment in the following situations:

- Infants less than 6 months of age.
- Anytime if the diarrhea is bloody, especially with fever and severe abdominal cramps, or if the vomiting is severe and persistent.
- For adults, if the condition does not improve in 7-10 days. For children, any time if there are signs of dehydration, such as crying but no tears, dry mouth, not urinating in 24 hours, and severe weakness and irritability.
- Severe diarrhea and cramps while on antibiotics.
- If many people in the family or friends are sick at the same time with the same symptoms (to notify public health to check for food poisoning or contamination.)

For more information, advice, or to make an appointment:

**Benton Health Center**  
530 NW 27<sup>th</sup> Street  
Corvallis, OR 97330  
(541) 766-6835

**East Linn Health Center**  
100 Mullins Drive #A-1  
Lebanon, OR 97355  
(541) 451-6920

**Lincoln Health Center**  
121 SE Viewmont Ave.  
Corvallis, OR 97333  
(541) 766-3546

**Monroe Health Center**  
610 Dragon Drive  
Monroe, OR 97456  
(541) 847-5143