

Besides treating diarrhoea when it starts, here are additional tips to help you manage and avoid diarrhoea.

- Drink an adequate amount of fluids. Even if you are vomiting you should try and drink as much as you can tolerate. Take small frequent sips.⁽²⁾
- Avoid the following drinks and foods:⁽³⁾
 - Caffeine: coffee, tea, cola, some pain and headache tablets
 - Apple and pear juice, grapes, honey, dates, nuts, figs, soft drink (especially fruit flavoured)
 - Milk, ice cream, frozen yoghurt, soft cheese, yoghurt
 - Antacids
 - Sugar
- As symptoms improve gradually add bland foods:
 - Cooked cereal, rice, bananas, apple sauce, toast⁽⁴⁾
- Avoiding Traveller's diarrhoea:⁽⁵⁾
 - Drink bottled, boiled or purified water
 - Avoid salad, raw vegetables and unpeeled fruit
 - Avoid ice cubes, ice cream and unpasteurised milk
 - Avoiding eating food from street vendors⁽⁶⁾

If you think you suffer from recurring diarrhoea or frequent diarrhoea or if you have a serious condition, talk to your doctor. Causes of frequent diarrhoea are extensive and can include such varied conditions as food intolerance, intestinal diseases, reaction to medicines and functional bowel disorders.⁽²⁾

**Ask your doctor or pharmacist for the
No 1. brand in diarrhoea treatment⁽⁶⁾**

References: 1. Talley NJ, et al. *Gastroenterology and Hepatology*. 2007; 1-557. 2. Beers MH. Editor in Chief The Merck Manual of Medical Information. Second Home Edition. May 2004. 3. Imodium, Common causes of diarrhea, Diarrhea myths and facts. Available at www.imodium.com. Accessed on 11/5/2009. 4. TGI Data, March 2004. 5. Beers MH. Editor in Chief The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy 18th Edition 2006. 6. IMS Data on file, March 2009. 25/IMQ/05/09/P/PA



Diarrhoea

Know your
symptoms
and manage
diarrhoea

If you suffer from diarrhoea often, you know how uncomfortable it can make you feel, but if you know what causes diarrhoea and how to prevent it, you have the freedom to carry on with your daily activities.

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What is diarrhoea?

Diarrhoea is the increase in the volume, wateriness or frequency of bowel movements. ⁽¹⁾ It is part of a group conditions known as Gastroenteritis. ⁽²⁾

For a stool to have a normal consistency, ingested foods and fluids must travel slowly through the gastrointestinal tract so that the nutrients and fluids may be absorbed adequately. When diarrhoea occurs, this does not happen and could be due to: ⁽³⁾

- Stool passing through the intestines too quickly
- The intestines do not absorb the fluid correctly
- Fluid being secreted into large intestines into the stool

What causes diarrhoea?

Diarrhoea can be caused by infections, medications and even your eating habits. ⁽³⁾

- Viral and bacterial infections
 - Viral – Rotavirus, Norovirus (Travellers)
 - Bacterial – are typically from contaminated food or water and include salmonella and *E.coli*. The most common cause of Traveller's Diarrhoea is a bacterial infection.
- Medications
 - Antibiotics
 - Some blood pressure medications
 - Antacids containing magnesium
- Food intolerance
 - Lactose – sugar found in milk and other dairy products
 - Gluten – protein found in many types of grain, including wheat, barley, oats and rye
- Artificial sweeteners
 - Often found in chewing gum and sugar-free products
- Excessive caffeine or alcohol
 - Both stimulate your intestines. When too much is consumed, loose stools may follow
- Premenstrual syndrome
 - It is thought that symptoms of PMS are caused by changes in female hormone levels

13 million people suffer from diarrhoea annually but 63% choose not to treat based on the following myths ⁽⁴⁾

Myths ⁽³⁾

- Diarrhoea is always a sign of a "bug" in my system that needs to run its course.
- Diarrhoea is usually caused by spicy foods.
- I'm afraid my body will become addicted to products that treat diarrhoea if I use them too much.
- If a child has diarrhoea, it's best to let it "run its course".

Facts ⁽³⁾

- Diarrhoea is not always an immune response to get rid of an infection – it can be the result of a disruption to your digestive system. Treating your diarrhoea can help relieve your symptoms and allow you to get on with your life.
- The most common cause of diarrhoea is a virus that infects the digestive system. Diarrhoea may also be caused by bacteria (the cause of most types of food poisoning), stress, medications and allergies to certain foods.
- When used as directed, products that treat diarrhoea are non-habit-forming and have been shown to be an effective way to manage diarrhoea.
- Diarrhoea in children can lead to dehydration - often more quickly than it does in adults.