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Diarrhoea in Toddlers

Diarrhoea is characterised by very frequent, liquid stools. It is important to identify the cause before diarrhoea can be treated effectively. Parents often seek the advice of a dietitian or doctor if they are unsure.

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Sunday, January 3rd, 2016

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Diarrhoea is a very loose foul smelling mess contained in and often oozing out of your toddlers nappy or underpants. And if that is not bad enough it can occur many times in a day. Toddler diarrhoea can have several causes, including:

- Lactose Intolerance following gastro;
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome in older children;
- Coeliac Disease;
- Allergy to foods;
- Intolerance to foods;
- Intestinal, bacterial, viral or parasitic infections;
- An unbalanced microflora;
- Side effects of some medications;

It is important to identify the cause before diarrhoea can be treated effectively, seek medical advice if you are unsure of the cause and are concerned. Seek the help of a dietitian for a suitable balanced diet to help alleviate the symptoms of diarrhoea.

When your toddler has diarrhoea they are at risk of dehydration. Be sure to offer them water or breast milk (if you still have some) regularly during the day. Make sure your toddler is having at least six wet nappies a day or if they are toilet trained they are still going to the toilet regularly; and their lips are not dry.

A rehydration electrolyte solution may be required if diarrhoea has been severe or lasts several days. Ask your local pharmacist if this is appropriate. If your toddler's diarrhoea does not resolve your doctor may order tests from poo samples. This is to identify any bacteria, parasites, or other causes.

Medications or diet restrictions should only be tried under medical supervision and advice.

Until the cause of your toddler's diarrhoea is determined always treat the diarrhoea as contagious and be vigilant with hand washing and nappy disposal.

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