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Palliative Care Program

# Diarrhea



المركز الوطني لعلاج وأبحاث السرطان
National Center for Cancer Care & Research

عضو في مؤسسة حمد الطبية
A Member of Hamad Medical Corporation

**"I was afraid to go to places without a bathroom close by. My nurse told me about which foods to eat to make me feel better. She also advised me on which medicines would benefit me most."**

**Q: What is diarrhea?**

**A:** Diarrhea is defined as a significant increase in the frequency of a person's bowel movements. They may also be soft, loose, or watery.

### Call your doctor or nurse if:

- You feel dizzy
- You have a fever of 380 C or higher
- You have diarrhea and cramps for more than a day
- Your rectal area is sore or bleeds.

### The following steps will help to ease and prevent diarrhea:

- Eat small meals that are easy to digest.
  - Eat five or six small meals each day, instead of three big meals.
  - Foods such as bananas, apple sauce, white rice and white toast are easy to digest.
- Drink more fluids each day.
  - Keep in mind that drinking more won't stop the diarrhea, but it will help replace fluids you are losing.
  - Most people who have diarrhea need to drink eight to 12 cups of liquid (ideally water) every day.
  - Clear broth and gelatin are good choices for most people.
- Avoid eating the following foods as they may increase the symptoms of diarrhea:
  - Dairy products, such as milk, cheese and sour cream.
  - Spicy, greasy or fried foods.
  - Food that causes gas, such as broccoli and cabbage.
  - Food that is high in fiber, such as whole wheat breads, granola and bran cereals.
  - Raw fruits or vegetables. Most canned fruits and vegetables are okay.
- Avoid the following drinks as they may increase the symptoms of diarrhea:
  - Beer, wine, and other drinks with alcohol in them.
  - Caffeine drinks including cola, coffee, and black tea.

### The following food and drinks may help if you have diarrhea:

- Soup (clear liquids)
- Clear broth, such as chicken, vegetable or beef.
- Clear soda, such as ginger ale
- Cranberry or grape juice
- Oral rehydration drinks such as pedialyte
- Tea (without caffeine)
- Water
- Meals and snacks
- Apple sauce
- Bananas
- Crackers
- Cream of wheat or cream of rice cereal
- Gelatin
- Meat, such as chicken, fish, or turkey-broiled or baked, without the skin
- Noodles
- Oatmeal
- Peanut butter
- Boiled potatoes ,without the skin
- White rice
- White toast

### Check with your doctor or nurse before taking medicine for diarrhea

### Questions to ask your doctor or nurse:

1. Which medicine is okay for me to take?
2. How much fluid should I drink each day?
3. What are oral rehydration drinks?
4. Can you give me the name of a dietician so I can learn more about the best foods to eat?
5. What is a sitz bath? Should I take this?