

What are the symptoms?

- Loose or watery stool
- Bloating, gas
- Abdominal cramping
- Lack of appetite
- Low grade fever/chills
- Body aches

Typically, no serious consequences occur, and the condition resolves in a few days without medical treatment.

How do I feel better?

- Drink fluids and get plenty of rest. Do not consume alcohol or caffeine.
- Avoid medications containing aspirin or ibuprofen, which may irritate your stomach, and do not take any medications by mouth unless directed by your medical care provider.
- The most important goal of treatment is preventing dehydration (fluid loss) and loss of important chemicals known as electrolytes from diarrhea. Dehydration can be serious if left untreated. ***The best way to prevent and treat dehydration is by drinking fluids.***
- For mild diarrhea, most healthy adults can meet their fluid and salt needs with diluted fruit juices, flavored soft drinks (Sprite, gingerale), broths, soups, and saltine crackers.
- Sports drinks, like Gatorade, may also be used, but Pedialyte is preferred because it contains less sugar (excess sugar can worsen diarrhea).
- A special diet known as the **BRAT** diet (**B**ananas, **R**ice, **A**pplesauce, and **T**oast) is an effective way to treat diarrhea.
- Bland foods (noodles, crackers, oatmeal, yogurt, boiled/baked potatoes, boiled carrots, boiled/baked skinless chicken, etc.) flavored with salt.
- After a significant diarrheal illness, it is best to avoid lactose (dairy) products (except for yogurt) until your gut has fully recovered.
- **Loperamide (Imodium)** can be taken for 1-2 days to treat diarrhea as long as you are not running a high fever (>101°F), and there is no blood or mucus in your stool. You should stop taking Imodium and see a healthcare provider if your diarrhea lasts for more than 48 hours.
- **Bismuth (Pepto-Bismol)** may also help reduce the number of loose stools.
- Probiotics may help shorten the course of diarrhea.

Seek medical treatment if:

- Symptoms last more than 2-3 days
- You are unable to keep fluids down
- You see blood or mucus in your stool
- You have a fever of 101°F (38.33°C) or higher
- You have localized and/or persistent abdominal pain

Recommended diets for stomach illnesses:

Clear liquid diet

- Apple, grape or cranberry juice
- Kool-Aid
- Fruit punch
- Gatorade
- Ginger ale or 7UP
- Decaf tea
- Clear bouillon
- Jell-O
- Popsicles
- Fruit ice
- Salt

Clear liquid diet, plus

- Coffee
- White bread or toast
- Cooked or ready-to-eat cereal (no bran)
- Graham crackers
- Saltines
- Pasta or rice
- Soft, cooked vegetables
- Boiled or mashed potatoes
- Apple sauce
- Bananas or seedless melon
- Cooked or canned fruits
- Mild cheese or cottage cheese

Full liquid diet

- Cocoa
- Carbonated, decaf beverages
- Broth
- Strained, bland soups
- Cream of wheat or rice cereals
- Decaf tea
- Vegetable juices
- Strained fruit juices or nectars
- Sherbets
- Honey

Soft full liquid diet, plus

- Soft-cooked, poached or hard-boiled or scrambled eggs
- Tender meat, fish or poultry
- Soft cake or cookies without nuts or raisins
- Butter, cream or margarine
- Jelly

Things to avoid while recovering

- Alcohol and Caffeine
- Dairy products
- Citrus products
- Fatty, greasy and/or fried foods
- Raw fruits and vegetables
- Aspirin and Ibuprofen