

Diarrhea and Cramps

Diet:

1. Eat food warm rather than hot or very cold. Extremes in temperature may aggravate the diarrhea, therefore foods served warm or at room temperature are more easily tolerated.
2. Save beverages for between meals. Beverages used to restore electrolyte balance include bouillon, fruit-aid, apple juice, grape juice, weak tea, or gelatin.
3. Eat small frequent meals. Relax and enjoy!
4. Avoid cramp or gas-producing foods, such as cabbage, broccoli, brussel sprouts, beans, onions, beer and other carbonated beverages, and highly spiced foods.
5. Avoid high-fiber foods: raw fruits and vegetables, whole grain cereals, bran and nuts.
6. Add nutmeg to foods. This spice may decrease the motility of the gastrointestinal tract.
7. Include foods high in potassium if signs of weakness or fatigue are present or if your doctor tells you lab tests indicate a low potassium level. These include bananas, avocado, potatoes, halibut, tomatoes and asparagus tips.
8. Potassium supplements may be necessary if diarrhea persists. Your doctor will prescribe them for you.
9. When you feel better, eat a low residue diet that is high in protein and calories: eggs (not fried), macaroni, white rice, baked, boiled or mashed potatoes, and smooth peanut butter.

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Activity:

1. Include frequent rest periods while still participating in your usual life style as much as possible. Be sure to rest when fatigued.
2. Initiate care measures of the skin and mucous membrane around the rectal area to promote healing and comfort. Cleanse with a mild soap- Ivory or Dove and warm water after every movement, or use disposable wipes.

Remember:

1. Check with your doctor or nurse if diarrhea persists.
2. Check with your doctor before using any anti-diarrheal agent. Your doctor will be able to pick the one that's best for you.
3. Keep a record of the number of bowel movements as well as characteristics and amount so you can report it to your doctor.