

## Diarrhoea- Causes and Dietary Guide lance

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It is one of the gastro intestinal disease that occur to both children and adults. Majority of gastrointestinal diseases are water borne due to consumption of polluted water. Loose and watery stools, in other words it is morbid evacuation of the bowels, the stools being fluid in nature, with increased frequency. The number of stools varies from several per day to one every few minutes. It is common and affects people of all ages.

### Major causes of diarrhoea

**Indigestion:** Over eating or eating foods difficult to digest may cause indigestion and then diarrhoea

**Infections:** Pathogens (viruses, bacteria, and parasites) can cause infections in intestinal tract that lead to diarrhoea. The most common cause of diarrhoea in adults is the norovirus that causes gastroenteritis. Rotavirus is the most common cause of acute diarrhoea in children

**Food poisoning:** You can ingest harmful toxins and pathogens from contaminated foods or drinks. Once they're in your gut, the toxins or germs can cause diarrhoea. Travelers' diarrhoea

is when you get diarrhoea while traveling in a new environment with poor hygiene or sanitation. Usually, it's exposure to bacteria that gives you diarrhoea

**Medications:** Diarrhoea is a common medication side effect. For example, antibiotics kill harmful bacteria that make you sick, but they can destroy helpful bacteria in the process. Not having enough good bacteria can lead to diarrhoea. Diarrhoea is also a side effect of antacids. with magnesium and some cancer drugs and treatments. Excess intake of laxatives can also cause diarrhoea

**Allergies:** Allergies to certain substances or foods such as milk, wheat, egg and sea foods may upset our digestive system. Lactose intolerance people find

difficulty in digestion of lactose (Milk sugar). Some people have trouble digesting fructose, a sugar in honey and fruits that's added as a sweetener to some foods. With celiac disease, you get diarrhoea because your body has trouble breaking down gluten, a protein in wheat.

### Classification of Diarrhoea

1. **Acute Diarrhoea:** This is characterized by the sudden onset of frequent stools of watery consistency accompanied by abdominal pain, cramps, weakness and sometimes fever and vomiting. Acute diarrhoea may also be due to some infections such as gastro-enteritis or ulcerative colitis
2. **Chronic Diarrhoea:** Diarrhoea can be termed chronic when it persists for two weeks or sometimes even longer. The food is passed very rapidly through the small intestine thereby not allowing any time for nutrients to be absorbed. This results in nutritional deficiencies

### Effect of diarrhoea

Dehydration is the major and dangerous outcome of diarrhoea, whether acute or chronic. Dehydration specially in infants can set in very suddenly. These water and electrolyte losses can be fatal and hence must be restored immediately.

### Treatment/ dietary guidelines

- An effective preventive measure would be to start Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT). It is based on the administration of correct oral fluids while allowing food intake, provides a balanced water and electrolyte replacement at low cost and save lives

At the first sign of diarrhoea a simple formula can be made at home

In one liter boiled and cooled water mixed with 20 g of glucose or 40g of sugar- Add Sodium chloride-3.5g, sodium bicarbonate-2.5g, potassium chloride-1.5g(lemon juice)- This can be given at least 4-6 glasses per day

- When the person stabilizes, he can be given liquids like water, coconut water, buttermilk and rice water (Prepared by cooking rice in lot of water to which salt is added to taste). When the

patient is able to eat start semisolid foods like soft cooked rice, mashed banana, curds, mashed potatoes. Breast feeding of infants should be continued.

- Certain natural remedies have been found to be effective. They are carrot soup, banana, peeled apple, curd and garlic. Carrot soup supplies water to combat dehydration, replenishes

sodium, potassium, phosphorus, calcium, sulphur and magnesiums, supplies some pectin and coats the intestine to allay inflammation. Bananas contain pectin and encourage the growth of beneficial bacteria, curd overcomes intestinal flora and re-establishes normal, benign flora garlic kills parasites and aids in digestion.

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