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DIARRHEA WITH ANTIBIOTICS

What is antibiotic-associated diarrhea?

Many antibiotics cause diarrhea. This is an irritative reaction (that is, the antibiotic acts like a laxative), not an allergic one. The diarrhea is usually mild and will not cause a child to become dehydrated or lose weight. The stools return to normal 1 or 2 days after the child finishes the antibiotic treatment.

How can I take care of my child?

Your child does not need to stop taking the antibiotic. Your child's diet does not need to be changed, although you may wish to cut back on beans and apple, grape, pear, and peach juices. Your child can continue drinking cranberry juice and orange or other citrus juices.

Sometimes the diarrhea causes a diaper rash. Wash the irritated area with water and then protect the skin with a thick layer of diaper ointment.

When should I call my child's health care provider?

Call IMMEDIATELY if:

- Blood appears in the diarrhea.
- Your child shows any signs of dehydration.

Call during office hours if:

- You want to stop the antibiotic.
- You have other concerns or questions.