



Diarrhoea and Vomiting

Tips for running a successful session

- Works best in groups of 3-12 parents.
- Having a colleague on hand would be really useful to look after the children. The session is easiest to run when the children are occupied such as their break time.
- Do spend time talking about how the parents might feel i.e. panicky and stressed and how they might manage this. They should trust their inner 'alarm bells' and if worried should speak to their GP, health visitor or NHS 111.
- If there are questions that you do not feel you can answer, be honest; "I am not a health care worker and do not know the answer, however if you are worried about your child take a look at the Healthier Together website for useful info (www.what0-18.nhs.uk) or see your GP".
- Make sure that you give parents/carers an information leaflet at the end of the session.
- The whole session should take about 30mins or so depending on how chatty the group are.

Starting the session

- You can start by asking **"What do you do if your child has loose poo and is vomiting?"**
- Answers from parents might be something like 'drink plenty' 'see a doctor' or 'starve them'. You can also ask **"when would you take your child to the doctor?"**
- Use the flash cards to make the session more interactive. They can be used in different ways such as:
 - parents (or children) picking a card from a hat or box and reading it for the group with discussion after.
 - cards handed round at the beginning and parents reading from them with discussion after them.
- Be on hand to help with parents with poor reading skills.

Important points to cover:

- State that D&V is common, usually caused by a virus and can last 5-7 days.
- Discuss practical things such as washing hands and having a bucket just for sick.
 - To avoid spreading the infection to other family members, wash hands with soap and water after changing nappies. Keep toilets clean and don't share towels.
 - Children should be kept away from nursery/school until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours.
- Explain how important dehydration is. Babies under a year of age are at much higher risk of becoming dehydrated than older children.
 - If a child is brought to hospital, the parents are asked to give 5mls of fluid every 10 mins or so from a syringe - small amounts, but frequently - 'little and often'. Large amounts of fluid are likely to make the child vomit.
 - Advise clear drinks, rehydration solution, normal breast feeds, avoid fizzy drinks. Don't dilute formula.
 - If the diarrhoea and vomiting lasts longer than 48 hours they should use rehydration solution so that their child has enough sugar and salt on board.
 - They do not need to starve their child, they will eat if they want.

When to take their child to see a doctor:

- Passing very little urine – not having a pee or wetting a nappy for more than 12 hours
- No tears when crying
- Sunken eyes
- Very dry tongue or lips
- Difficulty in waking their child
- Blood in the poo or vomit

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