



 Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

## Abdominal Pain in Children Treatment

### Self-Care at Home

A parent or caregiver must be observant and should contact appropriate help at the appropriate time. Monitor a child especially closely during recovery until the child is better. A teenager may not want to be bothered but still should be monitored.

- **Rest:** A child with active abdominal pain often will benefit from resting. Lying face down may help relieve gas pain, but the optimal position is the one that feels best to the child.
- **Diet:** People can survive a long time without solid food but need to keep up on liquids. Dehydration takes time to develop, so forcing fluids is not always necessary. A child who is actively vomiting will not be able to hold down a large amount of liquid. Doctors recommend giving small amounts (1–2 ounces) at a time (every 15–20 minutes typically) until the child can handle more.
- **Fluids:** Do not give water or boiled milk to infants because it can cause serious problems with the salt content of their bodies. Doctors recommend various dehydration liquids, for example Pedialyte, that you can buy over-the-counter without a prescription. Try to get the infant back on the usual feedings as soon as possible. Good choices for older children include ginger ale or simple soup broth. Avoid milk, fruit juices, heavily carbonated beverages, coffee, and sports drinks (such as Gatorade) in patients with diarrhea, since the gut may not tolerate these fluids. If older children ask for soft drinks, avoid those with caffeine.
- **Solid foods:** The child will let you know when it is time to get back on solid food. Start them slowly – first with toast or crackers – and advance to regular foods if they tolerate the feedings. Banana or cooked rice are also suitable foods for introduction after a full liquid diet.
- **Medications:** You can use acetaminophen (Aspirin Free, Children's Silapap, Panadol, Liquiprin, Tylenol) to control fever. Most doctors still avoid aspirin in children. Avoid antibiotics unless prescribed by a doctor. Physicians do not recommend herbal medicines or other home remedies. If you use them and later see a physician, be sure to say what you gave the child, because it could affect the treatment recommendations.

## Medical Treatment

Treatment will be prescribed according to the history, physical examination, test results, and the individual child. Treatment may be as simple as sending the child home with instructions for rest, encouraging fluids, and eating a bland diet. Treatment can be as extensive as hospital admission and surgery.

### more information from eMedicineHealth

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For more information, read the complete article, Abdominal Pain in Children (<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=59424>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

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