

Toddler diarrhoea: dietary management

Dietetics and Nutrition

Information for Patients

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What is toddler diarrhoea?

Toddler diarrhoea is when your child has loose watery stools which happen more than 2 times a day. Some children can get up to 10 loose stools per day. It is common in young children. It often gets better by 5 years of age. We think it is caused by food moving quickly through the bowel. Toddler diarrhoea is not a serious bowel problem. Your child should continue to get enough nutrients from food to grow.

Dietary management using the 3F's: Fluid, Fibre, Fat

1. Fluid

Drinking too much sweet or sugary juice or squash, can make your child poo more. Sugars and sweeteners can upset the tummy and pull water into the bowel. This makes your child need to poo more often.

- Try to have your child drink at least **1 litre of fluid** per day. Stick to water and milk. Your child should drink no more than 500ml of milk per day.

2. Fibre

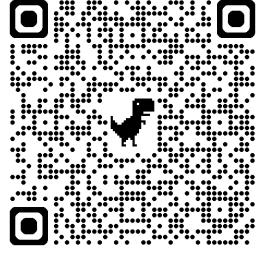
Fibre helps to poo regularly. It also helps maintain normal gut bacteria. Children between **2 to 5 years** need around **15** grams fibre per day. There are 2 types of fibre:

- **Soluble fibre** helps make stools softer and slows down the time it takes to move through the bowel. This can be oats, beans, lentils, citrus fruits, berries, and fruits and vegetables.
- **Insoluble fibre** bulks up stools by absorbing water in the bowel and making them easier to pass. Sometimes, eating too much insoluble fibre can have a laxative effect. This can be whole grains, cereals, nuts and seeds, and the skins of fruits and vegetables.

Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
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Visit www.uhleicester.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact uhl-tr.informationforpatientsmailbox@nhs.net

Scan the QR code to help you know if your child is getting enough fibre.



3. Fat

Fat slows down the speed of food moving through the body. This gives your body more time to digest and absorb the food. Here is a list of foods with fat:

- **Full fat dairy products** like yoghurt, cheese and full fat milk. These are also a good source of protein, calcium and iodine.
- **Oily fish**, like salmon, mackerel, herring, and sardines. They are also a good source of protein and the omega 3 fats.
- **Red meat**, like beef, pork, lamb and goat. They are also a good source of protein, iron, zinc and B12. However, they are high in saturated fats, and 3 portions a week is plenty.
- **Smooth nut butters**, like peanut, almond, hazelnut, cashew, and pecan butter. You should avoid whole nuts with children under the age of 5 years as it can be a hazard of choking.
- **Oils** like olive oil, coconut oil, ghee, and rapeseed oil can be used in cooking.

What if the dietary management does not work?

Speak to your GP if symptoms do not improve or your child appears unwell. You can also talk to them about any other concerns you may have.

Contact details:

Nutrition and Dietetic Service

Phone: **0116 258 5400**

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4:30pm

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