

Diarrhoea

in adults



Diarrhoea can have various causes. Acute diarrhoea may be caused by viruses, bacteria or, more rarely, parasites, as well as by an unsuitable diet or psychological stress. In most cases, the causes are harmless and the symptoms resolve on their own after a few days. If diarrhoea persists for more than two weeks, it is referred to as chronic diarrhoea, which may, for example, be triggered by food intolerances.

What can you do to relieve diarrhoea?

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink enough fluids – 2.5 to 3 litres per day, but only in small amounts at a time.
- Drink mainly unsweetened herbal teas (e.g. chamomile, fennel or peppermint).
- In cases of significant fluid loss, the use of electrolyte solutions from a pharmacy is also recommended.
- Avoid fizzy drinks, fruit juices and sports drinks.
- Eat only small meals and easily digestible foods, such as rusks, rice, potatoes, porridge, bananas, or vegetable or chicken soup.
- Foods that can help to firm stools include:
 - Dried blueberries (chewed or taken as a decoction)
 - Raw apple (peeled, grated and left to turn brown)
 - Steamed carrots
- If you experience abdominal cramps, applying a hot water bottle or a warmed cherry stone cushion may help relieve the discomfort.

When should you seek medical advice?

Please contact your GP in the following circumstances:

- If your diarrhoea has not improved significantly after two days.
- If you also develop vomiting or a fever.
- If you experience circulatory problems despite drinking enough fluids.
- If you are unable to drink sufficient fluids.
- If you need to take important medication that you may not be able to keep down.
- If you have a weakened immune system or a chronic medical condition.
- If you have recently returned from overseas travel.

Is your GP practice currently closed?

In most cases, it is enough to call when the practice next opens.

Not sure? Call 1450, the health advice helpline.

Further information and sources are available at
www.wobinichrichtig.at.



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When should you seek immediate medical attention?

Seek immediate medical attention if:

- You have blood in your stools.
- You have a high fever (above 38.5°C).
- You have severe abdominal pain and your abdomen is very tender when touched.
- You show signs of dehydration, such as reduced skin elasticity (skin that remains tented when pinched), dry mucous membranes, little or no urine output, or low blood pressure.

Sources:

<https://www.msdmanuals.com/de/heim/verdaunungsst%C3%B6rungen/symptome-von-verdaunungsst%C3%B6rungen/durchfall-bei-erwachsenen?query=Durchfall>

<https://www.gesundheitsinformation.de/durchfall.html>

<https://www.oegk.at/cdscontent/?contentid=10007.892630&portal=oegkportal>

<https://www.sozialversicherung.at/cdscontent/?contentid=10007.862787&portal=svportal>

<https://www.1450.wien/gesundheitsinfos/durchfall-bei-erwachsenen/>

Translated by Übersetzungsbüro Express KG: <https://www.expresstranslation.at>

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