



Diarrhea

Dimock Community Health Center



What causes diarrhea?

Diarrhea is an increase in the number and fluidity of stools or bowel movements. Diarrhea can be caused by infections, medications, and some foods. Medications such as protease inhibitors such as ritonavir (Norvir) and nelfinavir (Viracept) and antivirals like ddI can all be causes of diarrhea.

Why should I be concerned about diarrhea?

Diarrhea that goes on for a while, can cause dehydration and make you feel very weak. Wasting or weight loss can also happen because your foods and medications are not absorbed by your body. With diarrhea, the food and medications are moving too quickly through the body to be absorbed.

When should I call my provider?

Any time that the diarrhea lasts more than 1 day you should call your provider. If the diarrhea is accompanied by fevers, severe cramping or belly pain, blood in the stool, or dizziness and weakness, you should call your provider sooner.

What do I tell my provider?

It is important to tell your provider how long you have had the diarrhea, if you are having any fevers, if there is any blood in the stools, what medications you are taking, and if you have had any recent changes in your diet.

What can be done about the diarrhea?

It is very important that you call your provider before starting any medications to control the diarrhea. Some of these medicines can make the problem much worse. Some foods can also make the diarrhea worse like fatty or fried foods, coffee, and even alcohol. Eating rice or drinking the water from rice can improve diarrhea and is safe. The workup and treatment will depend on the cause of the diarrhea.