



## Stomach/Belly Pain Dimock Community Health Center



### What causes belly (or stomach) pain?

When people talk about belly pain, they are often referring to pain in any part of the abdomen (or “belly”). Belly pain can have many causes because of all the organs in the abdomen. Some causes of belly pain are minor while others can be quite serious. Some of the things that can cause belly pain include medicines, constipation, ulcers, and infections and pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas).

### What should I do if I have belly pain?

When you first notice belly pain, you might ask yourself some questions to help you figure out what is causing the pain. When did you eat last? What did you eat? When did you last move your bowels? Are you feeling sick in any other way?

If you have very uncomfortable belly pain that lasts longer than a couple of hours, it is a good idea to call your health care provider. If you have severe pain that lasts longer than 15-20 minutes, you should call sooner. Some of the problems that can cause belly pain need quick medical attention. It will be helpful to your provider if you can tell them the following:

- ✓ Do you have a fever?
- ✓ Are you nauseated and/or vomiting?
- ✓ For women, when was your last menstrual period?
- ✓ When did you last move your bowels? Have you had diarrhea?
- ✓ Where is the pain located and what does it feel like?
- ✓ Are you on any new medications or supplements?
- ✓ Have you been drinking alcohol in the last week?
- ✓ Have you ever had this pain before? What made it go away?

### When should I call my provider?

Any time you have very uncomfortable belly pain that lasts longer than a couple of hours of severe pain which lasts longer than 15-30 minutes, you should call your provider. The provider will ask you some of the questions above about your pain and then may either make some suggestions or want to see you. At a visit for belly pain the clinician will look at, listen to, and feel your belly. If needed, your provider may also get some blood work, an x-ray, or an ultrasound (another type of picture of the belly) to help find the cause of your pain.