

Diarrhoea

Any illness can cause a lack of appetite, but try to make every mouthful count and choose nourishing foods and fluids to replenish your body when you have diarrhoea. Most cases of diarrhoea clear up within a few days. However, if you have persistent diarrhoea it is advisable to visit your GP.

- **Consider what may have triggered diarrhoea.** Infection, side effects of medication, too much alcohol and anxiety are common causes.
- **It is important to try and replace the fluid you are losing.** Aim to drink at least 1.6-2 litres (6-8 glasses) of fluid per day.
- **Taking small frequent sips of a drink** may be more manageable than drinking a whole glass at once.
- **Eat as soon as you can.** Choose plain light meals avoiding fatty or spicy foods.
- **Try eating little and often** as smaller portions are often easier to manage. Take time to chew your food well and relax after meals.
- **Choose fluid-rich foods** such as soup, vegetables and potato, as water in food also contributes towards our fluid intake (see 'Hydration boosters' resource for examples).
- **Avoid foods high in fibre** such as beans, bran cereal and nuts as these may worsen your diarrhoea.
- **Cook fruits and vegetables** rather than eating them raw as they will be easier to digest.
- **Choose white bread, pasta and rice** in place of wholegrain options.
- **Probiotic products** such as Yakult, Actimel or Activia may help shorten your bout of diarrhoea.
- **Return to your normal diet once symptoms improve** and reintroduce high-fibre foods gradually.



Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about these information sheets, please contact the Lambeth and Southwark Action on Malnutrition Project on 020 30495422 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

t: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

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t: 0848 143 4017 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk