Huskie Hints:

Self-Care for Vomiting & Diarrhea

Health Services
815-753-1311
www.niu.edu/healthservices
**VOMITING OR DIARRHEA**

Vomiting and diarrhea (frequent watery bowel movements) can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or parasites. Avoid undercooked (partially raw) meat or fish and unpasteurized dairy products (some soft cheeses). Studies show that handwashing with soap reduces diarrhea risk by 47%.

**HYDRATION AND DIET**

Most people can maintain adequate hydration with oral liquids and will not require intravenous fluids in the emergency room of the hospital.

- Drinking large amounts of liquid at one time will encourage vomiting or diarrhea. Instead, take small sips frequently and increase slowly as you begin to feel better.

- The type and amount of liquid are important. Start with ice chips for nausea and advance to clear liquids such as:
  - Pedialyte/Pedialyte popsicles
  - Water
  - 7-Up
  - Sprite
  - Ginger ale
  - Cream soda
  - Weak tea
  - Broth
  - Jell-O

- If you choose to use Gatorade or one of the other sport drinks, mix half and half with water.

**When you feel better, gradually advance your diet by adding:**

Plain crackers or dry toast. Then applesauce, canned peaches or pears, peeled apples, bananas, chicken or rice soup, cottage cheese, pudding, sherbet, potatoes (baked, broiled or mashed), rice noodles, cooked, skinless chicken or beef without fat. Again, it is important to start with very small portions more frequently and increase slowly as you begin to feel better.

**Then a general diet, avoiding:**

Spicy foods, fatty or greasy or fried foods, high-fiber foods like cabbage, sauerkraut, lettuce, beans, broccoli, cauliflower, other coarse vegetables, caffeine, milk, milk products and alcohol.

If you have 5 (five) or more watery stools in 24 hours, you may try some over-the-counter Loperamide (Imodium AD). Do NOT use this medication if you are having bloody diarrhea.

In case of bloody diarrhea, fevers, or persistent vomiting, seek medical care.

If your condition seriously worsens (severe vomiting or diarrhea), go to the hospital emergency room.