Patient Care Guidelines

Diarrhea

♦ ***Introduction*** Diarrhea is an increase in the number and the amount of stools per day. Diarrhea is defined by more than 3 loose to watery stools in one day. Diarrhea can cause dehydration. It is important to watch your child closely and give plenty of fluids to replace what is being lost.

♦ ***Treatment***

□ **Breastfed Infants**

- Continue to breastfeed at more frequent intervals.
- If the child is older than 4 months of age and is eating solid foods, continue foods such as rice, cereal, bananas and potatoes.

□ **Formula-Fed Infants**

- Continue to feed formula as usual but at more frequent intervals.
- If diarrhea is occurring more than 3 times, Pedialyte can be given for no more than 4 hours. You can give small frequent sips during that time.
- After 4 hours using Pedialyte, return to formula as usual.
- If the child is older than 4 months of age and is eating solid foods, continue foods such as rice, cereal, bananas, and potatoes.

□ **Children**

- Continue normal fluids but administer more often.
- Continue the diet as normal. The following foods are good options: dry cereal, oatmeal, crackers, toast, rice, noodles, bananas, carrots, rice, and applesauce.
- The following drinks/foods should be **avoided**: fatty foods, greasy foods, juice and soda.

- **Do not** give anti-diarrheal medicines, such as Immodium or Pepto-Bismol.

♦ *Call us immediately if:*

  □ Signs of dehydration – lips or mouth appear dry, decreased tears, decreased urine output (no wet diaper for 6-8 hours), unusual sleepiness
  □ Increasingly more ill with less interest in his surroundings
  □ Child is in pain
  □ Child will not take fluids
  □ Visible blood in diarrhea
  □ If there is a fever >102

♦ *Call us during office hours if:*

  □ Young age < 6 months
  □ Accompanied by vomiting in child < 2 years
  □ Fever > 101 in child < 2 years
  □ Fever > 101 lasting > 48 hours
  □ Large volume and frequency of stools