

## Diarrhea

Diarrhea, or loose stools, may be accompanied by stomach cramping. If diarrhea is present keep a record of how often it occurs and notify the Empath Health nurse.

### What to Do:

- Offer a bedpan or commode at least every two hours, or more often if needed.
- Increase fluid intake and encourage sipping slowly.
- Offer clear fruit juices (no pulp) as well as water. Avoid drinks with caffeine.
- Give frequent small meals such as oatmeal, strawberries, potatoes, apricots, pears, bananas, rice, applesauce or toast/crackers.
- Make sure all laxatives and stool softeners have been discontinued.
- After each loose stool, wash the rectal area with mild soap and water and apply skin protective lotion.
- Make sure the commode or bedpan is readily available.
- If in bed, place in a sitting position for a bowel movement by raising the head of the bed.
- Do not remain on the bedpan/commode for long periods of time.
- Always wash hands after using the toilet, commode or bedpan.

### Call Empath Health with any questions or if there is:

- Blood in the stool
- Nausea or vomiting
- Increased abdominal pain

### Notes to discuss with the nurse:

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**Call Empath Health with any questions (888) 855-2838:** \_\_\_\_\_

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