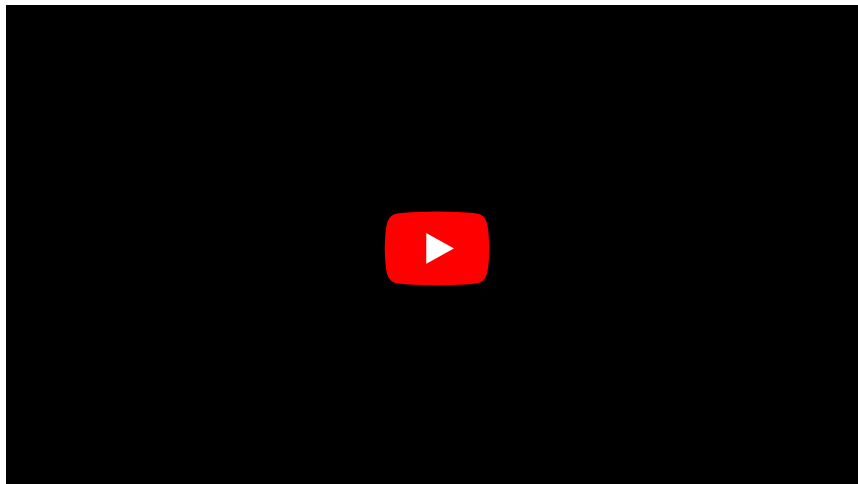


Diarrhea

Diarrhea is an increase in the frequency of bowel movements or a decrease in the form of stool (greater looseness of stool).

Diarrhea:



Causes of Diarrhea

Examples of some of the common causes of chronic diarrhea include: Infectious disease such as *Giardia lamblia*; following acute viral, bacterial, or parasitic infections; severe constipation; laxative abuse; endocrine diseases such as hyperthyroidism or Addison's disease.

Diarrhea also can be a symptom of a disease or condition. For example: fat malabsorption can cause diarrhea as a symptom of celiac disease, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), bacterial overgrowth of the small intestine (a condition in which normal colonic bacteria spread from the colon into the small intestine), and inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) such as Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

Diagnosis

- Testing of blood and stool may be needed.
- X-rays and ultrasound may also be necessary.
- Sigmoidoscopy or Colonoscopy are required to visually inspect the colon with a lighted, flexible tube.

Testing depends on how severe and prolonged the condition is, and how the physician evaluates a specific case.

Treatment

Taking only liquids by mouth and avoiding solid food and milk may be helpful. Over-the-counter constipating agents, such as Pepto-Bismol, Kaopectate, or Imodium can also be tried. For explosive or persistent diarrhea, treatment will obviously depend on the cause. Fortunately, the cause of diarrhea can almost always be found and effective treatment is then usually available.

Links

Related Articles

Bibliography

References

KUMAR, – CLARK,. *Clinical Medicine*. 8th edition. 2012. ISBN 9780702044991.

