TPPC INFORMATION HANDOUT:

**<| DIARRHEA - ENTERITIS |>**

**HOW DO THEY GET IT?**

Diarrhea is the frequent passage of liquid stools. It is most commonly caused by a virus, but may also be caused by a bacterial or parasitic infection. It may also be accompanied by vomiting and/or fever. By itself, diarrhea is not bad. It is the body's way of ridding itself of irritating bacteria or viral particles in an effort to help the patient heal. There is a common misconception that all diarrhea must be stopped. That is not so in infants and children. IT IS BEST TO LET IT RUN IT'S COURSE. Using Imodium or similar drugs may cause the diarrhea to stop but will allow the infection the possibility to enter the liver and may cause Hepatitis. If you see blood in the patient's stool, contact your physician immediately.

**TREATMENT**

The treatment of diarrhea is aimed at causing as little irritation as possible to the inflamed intestinal tract and by supplying adequate amounts of fluids to the body. In trying to have the patient's intestinal tract at rest, the following treatment for diarrhea is suggested

INFANTS

1. Discontinue formula for 48 hours.

2. Instead, give clear liquids in small amounts at a time very frequently as you do with vomiting (see Treatment of Vomiting). Then increase the amount of the fluids gradually.

3. After 48 hours, if the diarrhea has decreased, begin ¼th or ½ strength formula feeding again. If the infant was feeding on solids then start a BRAT diet, which consists of Bananas, Rice Cereal, Applesauce and Toast.

CHILDREN

1. Discontinue milk and any milk products and solid foods for 48 hours.

2. Begin giving clear liquids in small but frequent amounts as with vomiting (see Treatment of vomiting).

a. ½ strength Gatorade

b. Sprite/7-up

c. Jello water

d. Clear Broth

e. Diluted Apple Juice

f. Pedialyte

**NOTE**: Avoid diet colas as your child needs the calories.

3. After 48 hours, if the diarrhea has decreased and there is no vomiting, you may begin feeding your child

a. Soda Crackers

b. BRAT diet

c. Bland, light foods and advance over 2 days to a regular diet.

Serious **symptoms to watch for**:

 Decreased intake and/or frequent vomiting

 Dry mucous membranes in their mouth.

 No urination for 8 hours or more

 No tears.

 Sunken eyes.

 Listless.

 Fever of 100.4 degrees in infants less than 2 months and 102 degrees in the older children.

 Bloody stools.

**<<| OTC MEDICINE SUGGESTIONS |>>**

\*\*\*For Diarrhea and children older than 2 years of age, Peptobismol Chewables for children 2 years and up may help. For children older than 6, Immodium for children (no more than 3 doses) may help.