

## Stomach Pain

Almost everyone experiences a “stomach ache” at one time or another. Most of the causes of such abdominal pain are not serious and can be easily treated at home. On the other hand, it is important for us to be able to recognize symptoms that require us to see a doctor. There are multiple causes for stomach pain that include but are not limited to indigestion, constipation, menstrual cramps, food poisoning, gas, ulcers, kidney stones, or appendicitis.

### Symptoms

When someone is experiencing a stomach ache they may have pain or discomfort in the upper portion of their belly, burning in their chest (heartburn), burping, bloating, or even feeling full too quickly after he/she has begun to eat.

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms it is important to see your doctor or nurse as soon as possible:

- You have bloody bowel movements, severe diarrhea, or severe vomiting.
- Your pain is severe.
- You are unable to keep down food for more than one day.
- You are experiencing painful or unusually frequent urination.
- You have an elevated temperature.
- You lose a lot of weight without trying to, or lose interest in food

To make an appointment at Student Health Services, please call 910.521.6219.

### Treatment

If you are experiencing mild abdominal pain, you should rest and continue to drink plenty of fluids but avoid any carbonated or caffeinated beverages. Try eating smaller meals of dry crackers, toast, or even applesauce but avoid consuming any fatty foods, spicy foods, fruits, alcohol, and caffeinated drinks until at least 48 hours after all of your symptoms have gone away.

### Prevention

There are multiple ways to avoid the onset of stomach pain. To lower your chances of developing a “stomachache” you should do the following:

- Avoid alcohol consumption.
- Avoid smoking.
- Avoid fatty foods.
- Eat smaller meals instead of 2-3 larger meals.
- Stay away from foods that make your symptoms worse.
- Avoid taking medicines that make your symptoms worse such as Advil (Ibuprofen), Aleve (Naproxen) and Aspirin.
- If your stomach pain feels as though it is due to constipation, try adding more fiber into your diet. You can add more fiber by eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains or taking fiber pills or powders.