

Stomachaches

STOMACHACHES

(tummy troubles, belly pain)

There are many reasons why a child might feel belly pain. Grandmothers are usually right when they say, “You either need to eat or go to the bathroom!” But if this is not the problem, it could be:

Constipation

Constipation is one of the most common reasons for abdominal pain. If you haven’t had a bowel movement for a while or if it hurts to go to the bathroom or your bowel movements are hard, you are probably constipated.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea is often caused by gastroenteritis, an infection that some people call the stomach flu. When you have diarrhea—runny, watery bowel movements—you may also feel sick to your stomach.

Vomiting

Feeling sick to your stomach and throwing up can also be linked to gastroenteritis. The pain is one way your body tells you to stay near a bathroom!

Food

Some kids get abdominal pain because they ate too much of something, because they ate a food that was too spicy or greasy, because they have an allergy to what they ate, or because the food was sitting around in the fridge for too long and went bad. The pain is the body’s way of telling you that your stomach and intestines are having a tough job breaking down or digesting this food. For example, recurring pain can be caused by intolerance to an ingredient in milk called lactose, which some people have a problem digesting. Whatever the cause, funky foods can quickly make your tummy feel funky!

Infection

If you have an infection somewhere else in your body, you may get belly pain, too. A sore throat, pneumonia, an ear infection, or a cough can sometimes cause tummy trouble as well.

Other Painful Problems

Appendicitis, urinary tract infection or a blocked intestine can cause severe pain. Infection by bacteria or a parasite, heartburn, or inflammatory bowel disease can also cause abdominal pain.

Stress

Many, many kids (and adults, too) have a “nervous stomach” when they are worried or stressed.

If you’d like to prevent bellyaches, here are some good tips to follow:

- Don’t overeat.
- Eat fiber-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables, so your bowel movements are regular.
- Wash your hands before eating.
- Don’t eat right before bedtime.
- Get lots of sleep so your body doesn’t get run down.

Once your belly has started to hurt, you may be asked to avoid certain food products:

- Milk/dairy products
- Fatty/ fried foods
- Caffeine/chocolate

Taking a probiotics daily may also relieve/prevent symptoms. The best probiotics generally contain more than one germ and require refrigeration.

Always let your doctor know if belly pain persists!!!!

