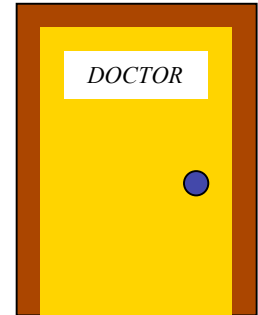


TREATMENT GUIDELINES

When should I go and see my doctor?

AAD (Acute Adult Diarrhea) is not a serious condition, as long as you are otherwise in good health. You should make sure you visit your physician if you, or the person you are caring for, is:

- Also suffering from a serious illness
- Under 12 and over 75 years old
- Suffering from recurrent and persistent diarrhea
- Showing or developing signs of severe dehydration, vomiting, blood in stools and/or fever
- Still suffering from diarrhea after 48 hours



Diarrhea usually does not last very long, generally only two or three days. If your diarrhea persists or recurs frequently then it may be due to an underlying condition such as irritable bowel syndrome and you should seek advice from your doctor.

An international panel of experts developed new treatment guidelines based on sound scientific evidence and have published them in *Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics* (Aliment Pharmacol Ther 2001; **15**:773-782).

AAD can be extremely uncomfortable and distressing for the sufferer. The new guidelines state that bouts of diarrhea can be safely and easily treated, providing effective relief from debilitating symptoms.

The panel reviewed a number of remedies and commercially available treatment options including:

- Anti-motility agents such as loperamide
- Probiotics
- Anti-microbials
- Oral rehydration solutions
- Fluid replacement
- Diet management

Treatment Option	Panel Recommendation
<p>Anti-motility agents such as loperamide <i>Agents that slow down the gut movement to combat dehydration and cramping. As well as reducing the symptoms, anti-motility agents can shorten the bout of diarrhea.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loperamide is the recommended treatment of choice for AAD • Other anti-diarrheals are not recommended because of uncertain efficacy
<p>Probiotics <i>Dietary supplements thought to maintain bacteria normally found in the gut</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probiotics are thought to have some value in helping to prevent diarrhea but there is little evidence to suggest that they treat the symptoms
<p>Oral rehydration solutions <i>Solutions to help combat dehydration and replenish body salts</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ORS is not necessary in otherwise healthy adults who can maintain normal fluid intake as guided by thirst. • The young, frail and elderly should take ORS and seek further medical advice
<p>Anti-microbials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-microbials should be reserved as prescription only • They may be included with loperamide in travel kits • Self-medication may be justified during a journey abroad, based on medical advice • Quinolones, are the anti-microbial currently recommended by travel specialists • Advice before departure is highly recommended for those traveling abroad
<p>Fluid intake</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate fluid intake should be maintained, as guided by thirst • The use of drinks containing glucose or electrolytes are recommended
<p>Diet Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solid foods should be consumed as guided by appetite • There is no evidence in adults that solid food hastens or retards recovery • Small light meals are recommended • Fatty, heavy, spicy or stimulant foods, such as caffeine, should be avoided