

## GE - Gastroenteritis

### GE-AP ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand anatomy and physiology as it relates to gastroenteritis.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain the normal anatomy and physiology of the gastrointestinal tract as it pertains to gastroenteritis.
2. Discuss the changes to anatomy and physiology as a result of gastroenteritis.
3. Discuss the impact of these changes on the patient's health or well-being.

### GE-C COMPLICATIONS

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the possible complications of gastroenteritis and which patients are at high risk for complications.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Discuss the common or serious complications of gastroenteritis, such as:
  - a. Dehydration
  - b. Electrolyte imbalance
  - c. Need for hospitalization
2. Explain that people with concurrent or chronic illness, the elderly, the very young, or people who have prolonged episodes of gastroenteritis are at higher risk for complications.

### GE-CUL CULTURAL/SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the impact and influences that cultural and spiritual traditions, practices, and beliefs have on health and wellness.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Discuss the potential role of cultural/spiritual traditions, practices and beliefs in achieving and maintaining health and wellness. Refer to clergy services, traditional healers, or other culturally appropriate resources.
2. Explain that traditional medicines/treatments should be reviewed with the healthcare provider to determine if there are positive or detrimental interactions with prescribed treatment. Explain that the medical treatment plan must be followed as prescribed to be effective.

## **GE-DP      DISEASE PROCESS**

**OUTCOME:** The patient will understand the causes and symptoms of gastroenteritis.

### **STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that gastroenteritis is usually caused by a viral infection and will go away on its own.
2. Review the signs and symptoms of gastroenteritis such as:
  - a. Colicky abdominal pain
  - b. Fever which may be low grade or higher
  - c. Diarrhea
  - d. Nausea and/or vomiting.
3. Discuss the potential for dehydration and signs of dehydration:
  - a. Dry sticky mouth
  - b. No tears when crying
  - c. No urine output for 8 hours or more
  - d. Sunken fontanelle (in an infant)
  - e. Sunken appearing eyes
  - f. Others as appropriate
4. Explain the need to seek immediate medical care if dehydration is suspected.

## **GE-FU      FOLLOW-UP**

**OUTCOME:** The patient will understand the importance of fully participating in treatment regimen and make a plan for appropriate follow-up.

### **STANDARDS:**

1. Discuss the individual's responsibility in the management of gastroenteritis.
2. Review the treatment plan with the patient, emphasizing the importance of checking for signs of dehydration.
3. Discuss the procedure for obtaining follow-up appointments as appropriate.

## **GE-HM      HOME MANAGEMENT**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the home management of gastroenteritis and make a plan for implementation.

### **STANDARDS:**

1. Discuss the home management plan and methods for implementation of the plan.

2. Explain the importance of following a home management plan, e.g., fewer emergency room visits, fewer hospitalizations and fewer complications, as well as, a healthier life.
3. Explain the relationship between hygiene and infection control principles. Emphasize importance of hand washing.

#### **GE-L LITERATURE**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will receive literature about gastroenteritis.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Provide the patient/family with literature on gastroenteritis.
2. Discuss the content of the literature.

#### **GE-M MEDICATIONS**

**OUTCOME:** The patient /family will understand the limited role medications play in the management of gastroenteritis.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that in most cases of gastroenteritis no medication is needed.
2. If medication is prescribed for nausea relief or diarrhea control, provide a brief description of how the medication works. Discuss the common or problematic side-effects.
3. Explain that many medications prescribed for nausea or diarrhea may cause drowsiness and the patient should avoid activities such as driving or operating heavy machinery while using these medications.
4. Explain the importance of proper hydration even in the face of drowsiness.

#### **GE-MNT MEDICAL NUTRITION THERAPY**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the specific nutritional intervention(s) needed for treatment or management of this condition, illness, or injury.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) is a systematic nutrition care process provided by a Registered Dietitian (RD) that consists of the following:
  - a. Assessment of the nutrition related condition.
  - b. Identification of the patient's nutritional problem.
  - c. Identification of a specific nutrition intervention therapy plan.
  - d. Evaluation of the patient's nutritional care outcomes.

- e. Reassessment as needed.
2. Review the basic nutrition recommendations for the treatment plan.
3. Discuss the benefits of nutrition and exercise to health and well-being.
4. Assist the patient/family in developing an appropriate nutrition care plan.
5. Refer to other providers or community resources as needed.

## **GE-N NUTRITION**

**OUTCOME:** The patient will understand ways to treat gastroenteritis by nutritional therapy.

### **STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that in gastroenteritis the gastrointestinal tract is not working properly.
2. Explain that gastrointestinal rest is essential to quick recovery from gastroenteritis.
3. Explain that water and many other clear liquids are rapidly absorbed across the stomach wall and do not require that the gastrointestinal tract be working properly. (Oral electrolyte solutions are excellent clear fluids for all who will take them.) Discourage the use of juices because many of them will make the diarrhea worse. Discourage the use of caffeinated beverages because they are dehydrating.
4. Explain that clear liquids taken in small amounts and frequently will often result in resolution of the vomiting, e.g., 1 teaspoonful to 1 tablespoonful every 5–10 minutes.
5. Explain that it is usually appropriate to go to a high starch/low fat diet gradually.

## **GE-PM PAIN MANAGEMENT**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the plan for pain management.

### **STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that medications may be helpful to control the symptoms of pain, nausea, and vomiting.
2. Explain that administration of fluids may be helpful with pain relief and resolution of symptoms.
3. Explain non-pharmacologic measures that may be helpful with pain control.  
**Refer to PM.**

## **GE-TE TESTS**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the test(s) to be performed, the potential risks, the expected benefits, and the risks of non-testing.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain test(s) that have been ordered (explain as appropriate):
  - a. method of testing
  - b. necessity, benefits, and risks of test(s) to be performed
  - c. any potential risk of refusal of recommended test(s)
  - d. any advance preparation and instructions required for the test(s)
  - e. how the results will be used for future medical decision-making
  - f. how to obtain the results of the test
2. Explain test results:
  - a. meaning of the test results
  - b. follow-up tests may be ordered based on the results
  - c. how results will impact or effect the treatment plan
  - d. recommendations based on the test results

**GE-TX      TREATMENT**

**OUTCOME:** The patient/family will understand the treatment plan for gastroenteritis.

**STANDARDS:**

1. Explain that the major treatment for viral gastroenteritis is dietary modification.
2. Explain that if the gastroenteritis is caused by a bacterium, antibiotics may be prescribed.
3. Explain that if the patient fails attempts at oral rehydration, I.V. rehydration is frequently necessary.