

MY LIFE-FIT HABITS **STOMACH ACHES**

What causes **stomach aches**?

Pain can be very distressing and take you away from having fun and enjoying life. Sometimes pain can make you unhappy and not feel like hanging out with your friends.

Some causes of stomach pain are:

- Can be caused by excessive gas and indigestion
- It might be butterflies in the tummy – anxiety or stress
- It may be inflammation of the gut
- It may be a reaction to something you ate, for example, a food intolerance
- Constipation can cause stomach pain
- It might be caused by a virus or infection, so it's always important to see a doctor

Did you know this weird fact about your **stomach**?

Your stomach lining also turns red when you blush from embarrassment or stress! This reaction is caused by the hormone adrenaline that prepares the body for stressful situations. Adrenaline makes your blood vessels dilate (get bigger) to improve blood flow and oxygen, in case you suddenly have to run from a dangerous situation, so you have more blood flowing through your veins, and it makes your face red (and your stomach lining!). Luckily, most times we feel that adrenaline rush, we aren't in real danger...it's usually because we did something silly or are embarrassed for another reason!

Try this Life-Fit **Challenge**

As well as seeing a doctor there are other things you can do.

Keep a diary for two weeks of all the times you have a stomach ache. Notice what you are doing at the time – where were you, what were you doing, what did you eat?

Also, ask yourself – am I worried about anything that is coming up in the future? Write these things down. Try and identify any common triggers.

Be sure to talk to your parents or doctor about what you discover and learn about your stomach aches.

What can I do to ease my **stomach ache**?

You should always see a doctor if you are experiencing pain.

- Make sure you drink enough water
- Ensure you are getting enough sleep
- Place a heat pack on your tummy
- Have a warm bath
- Try not to eat too much and just eat bland food
- Read our other tip sheets on mindfulness, deep breathing, thinking strong thoughts and relaxation if your doctor thinks the stomach issues are from stress or worry

Check out this **helpful** app for health issues.

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/healthtap-instant-help-from-105-000-top-doctors/id466079030?mt=8>

How to get extra help to **boost** your health and well-being

Try our other tip sheets. Speak to your parents, your teachers, your counsellor or another important adult you trust.

Try these support websites:

http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/stomache_ache.html
<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/abdominal-pain-in-children>

