

# PYLORIC STENOSIS

## **What is pyloric stenosis?**

Pyloric stenosis is the thickening of the muscle between the lower end of the stomach and the beginning of the small intestines. With this, food is not able to pass through that opening. Instead, your baby will frequently vomit (throw up), because the food has nowhere else to go.

## **How do I know if my baby has pyloric stenosis?**

If your baby, usually a few weeks old, starts to forcefully vomit up feedings, he/she may have pyloric stenosis. Pyloric stenosis isn't just a wet burp or spit up after a feeding. It is a forceful vomit, often times spraying milk several feet away. If your baby does this several times in a row, he/she needs to see a doctor.

## **What can happen if my baby doesn't get treated?**

If your baby continues to forcefully vomit, he can lose weight, have electrolyte imbalances (the sodium, potassium, magnesium, etc are too high or too low in the body), and become dehydrated (not enough water in the body).

## **How is pyloric stenosis diagnosed?**

Your doctor will ask you specific questions about your baby's eating patterns. Is he/she hungry right after vomiting, have his/her bowel movements decreased, and are his/her wet diapers fewer in number than normal? Occasionally, there is a history in the family of these occurring — usually first born male infants.

Your baby may go for a special x-ray where he/she drinks a solution that doctors can see on x-ray. An ultrasound of the abdomen can also show the problem.

## **What happens if my baby is diagnosed with pyloric stenosis?**

Once the tests show that your baby has pyloric stenosis, he/she will need surgery. The surgeon will perform a 'pyloromyotomy'---he will get rid of the obstruction causing your baby's vomiting. Your baby will not eat anything before going to surgery and will need an IV (to receive fluids while not eating and to 'catch up' on fluids lost while he was vomiting). Most infants will have general anesthesia—he/she will be asleep and unable to feel anything.

## **How long will my baby need to be in the hospital?**

Your baby will be in the hospital 1-2 nights after the surgery, as long as there are no complications. Feedings generally start a few hours after surgery (some times the next day). Your baby will be offered pain medication, as he/she needs it. After you go home, your doctor will want to see your baby in the clinic to make sure everything is OK.