

# Diarrhea



*What to know  
& what to do  
in case of diarrhea*

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## WHAT IS DIARRHEA?

"...the passage of three or more loose or liquid stools per day, or more frequent passage than is normal for the individual..."

### Why should you ask for medical help for diarrhea?

- | Diarrhea is a common medical symptom. Diarrhea can be caused by many conditions, including infections.
- | Diarrhea is not a common finding in CLL, however, some drugs may cause vomiting and/or nausea as a side effect.
- | A very common implication of diarrhea is dehydration. Mild to moderate dehydration can be reversed by drinking more fluids. However, severe dehydration can lead to serious health complications, so it requires immediate medical treatment.



### What are the main causes of diarrhea?

- | **Infections**, like gastroenteritis.
- | **Drugs** may cause diarrhea as a side effect (ask your physician what to expect and how to handle it).
- | **Other causes**, like intestine diseases.

*Inform your physician if you have diarrhea, especially when it is associated with the initiation of a new treatment.*

### What is relevant to notice and report about your diarrhea?

- | **Initiation.** When did your diarrhea start?  
If you **associate it with something** in particular.
- | **Frequency** of your symptoms (e.g., how often you need to go to the toilet).
- | **Quantity.** Is it high or low volume?
- | **Quality.** Any presence of mucus, blood? In case of blood, is it vivid red, dark or even black?
- | **Other symptoms** (cough, cold, fever, abdominal distension, aches, sweating, rash etc.).

*Inform your physician as soon as you suspect the presence of blood in your stools. Notice if they have vivid red or very dark (black) color (with or without odor).*

**AFTER CONTACTING YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM...**

*What should you notice? . . . . . You should ask for help again if...*

Outcomes

Your diarrhea persists and/or is getting worse

Diarrhea characteristics (quantity & quality)

You notice a change in the characteristics of your diarrhea

New & existing symptoms

You notice any new symptom or your existing symptoms are getting worse

Dehydration

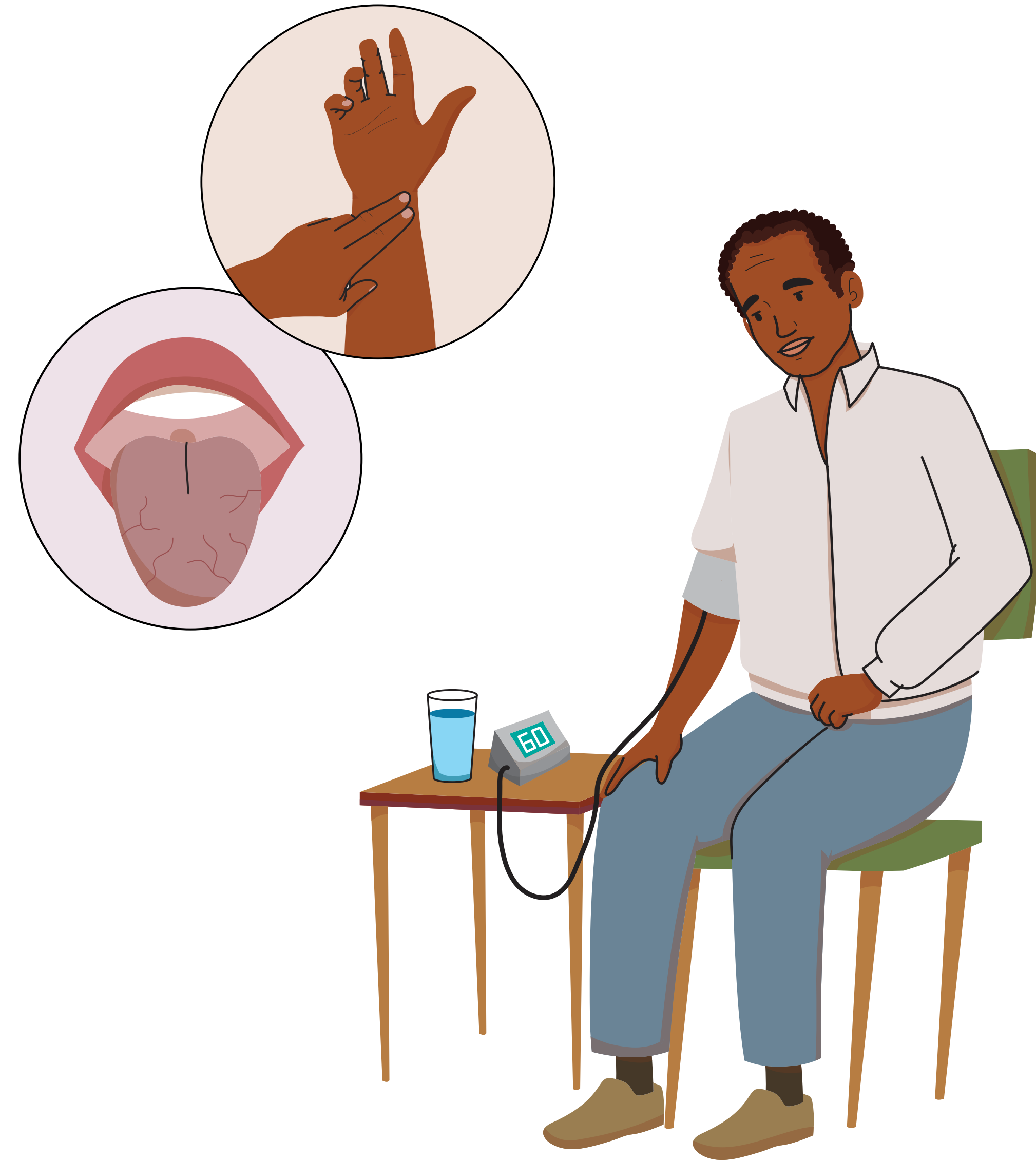
You cannot drink a lot of fluids and you feel dehydrated

### How can you recognize that you are dehydrated?

Check if:

- | your blood pressure is lower than usual.
- | your heart rate is higher than usual.  
(check your pulse at your wrist or use an electronic sphygmomanometer with heart rate indication)
- | your mouth is dry. You may not have enough saliva.
- | your urine output is decreased.
- | your skin is dry.
- | you experience weakness, nausea or cramps.

If you notice any of the above, please contact your physician.



**Remember!** ————— *Follow carefully the instructions of your physician.*

*Drink a lot of fluids in order to stay hydrated.*

*Eat small, non-fatty meals and avoid raw vegetables, fruit,  
dairy products and fried meals.*

*Do not use antidiarrheal agents without consulting your physician.*



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