COMMON CAUSES:
- "Stomach flu", which is a viral infection of the intestines
- Spoiled food, contaminated water, or infections from bacteria or parasites that affect the digestive tract
- Overuse of alcohol or laxatives
- Lactose intolerance or other food allergies
- Menstrual cramps
- Side effect of certain medications
- Stress or panic attack

NOTE: When traveling, find out about water and food recommendations!

DIARRHEA
Diarrhea is passing body waste from the bowel more often and in more of a liquid state than usual.

With diarrhea, do you have the following signs of dehydration:
- Sunken, dry, or teardless eyes
- Dry mouth, tongue, and lips
- No urine or a low amount of urine that is dark yellow
- Lightheadedness
- Dry skin
- Dizziness, confusion, weakness
- Increase in breathing and heart rate
- Severe thirst (may come and go)

Is there blood in the diarrhea or is its color tar-like (black) or maroon?

SELF-CARE: Follow your normal diet if there are no signs of dehydration. If there are signs of dehydration, stop solid foods and have 2 cups of clear fluids per hour, but avoid high sugar drinks. Avoid fatty and fried foods. Start eating normal meals within 12 hours. Try an over-the-counter anti-diarrheal medicine, such as Imodium A-D, but wait at least 12 hours before you take it.

Do you have abdominal or rectal pain?

Do you have:
- Gas, bloating, cramps, or pain in the abdomen
- Changes in bowel habit (constipation, diarrhea, or both), crampy urge, but inability to move your bowels, or mucus in your stool?

Do you have:
- Temperature of 101°F or higher
- Diarrhea that has lasted 48 hours or longer
- A chronic illness and have diarrhea more than 8 times a day?