

Tips and tricks for large volume enemas.

This handout can help you solve common problems when giving your child a large volume enema.

If the enema flow is slow:

- Leave the lid of the enema bag open as you give the enema.
- Squeeze the drip chamber of the enema tubing to fill it halfway with fluid.
- Take the cap off the tubing before inserting it into the catheter.

If you have catheter problems:

- The catheter is slipping out of the rectum while giving the enema:
 - Take the syringe off the catheter port after pushing air into the catheter balloon. If you keep it on, the air will come out of the balloon back into the syringe.
 - Make the balloon bigger by pushing more air into the balloon with the syringe. Go up by 10 mL at a time (for example, from 30 mL to 40 mL). The balloon will hold up to 75 mL.
- Poop is clogging the holes of the catheter:
 - Pull the catheter out of the rectum. Clean the catheter by pushing tap water through it with a 60 mL syringe and flush out the poop .
- Your child is pushing out the catheter or fluid is leaking around the balloon while giving the enema:
 - This is normal. Your child may feel pressure and the urge to poop. The balloon is soft and will not hurt them.
 - Distract your child with music, books, meditation, electronics, etc.
 - Have your child lie on their left side with knees up towards their chest. You may also try having them lie down on their belly with their bottom in the air.
 - Make the balloon bigger by pushing more air into the balloon with the syringe. Go up by 10 mL at a time (for example, from 30 mL to 40 mL). The balloon will hold up to 75 mL.
 - While giving the enema, gently pull back on the catheter until you feel resistance. This will form a plug that will stop the leaking.
- Your child tenses up and you are unable to put the catheter into the rectum:
 - Help your child relax by doing some deep breathing or distract your child with music, books, meditation, electronics, etc.
 - Lubricate the catheter well, gently pull apart the buttocks, and put the catheter in once your child relaxes.

If you have problems with the enema solution:

- Double-check the recipe and mix it correctly.
- Pour the right amount of saline into the enema bag before putting in the additives.
- If the solution is thick and clogs the tubing of the catheter:
 - Mix the solution right before use. Do not let it sit in the bag.
 - Massage the bag to mix it well. Then run it through the tubing.
- After each use, clean the bag and the tubing with soap and water. Let warm water run through the tubing to rinse it out. Let everything air dry.

If your child has nausea or vomits (throws up):

- Wait at least 1 hour after meals before giving an enema.
- Make sure your child drinks enough water during the day.
- Slow the flow using the roller clamp or by lowering the enema bag toward the floor.
- Make sure the fluid is warm. Never microwave the enema solution. You can warm it by placing the saline container in warm water (like warming a baby bottle).
- A cool washcloth on the neck or forehead can help your child feel better.

If your child has belly cramps:

- Some cramping (belly ache) is normal during an enema.
- Offer your child a warm pack or soft stuffed animal for comfort.
- Reassure your child that cramping is normal, and it will go away after they poop.
- Help your child relax by doing some deep breathing or distracting your child with music, books, meditation, electronics, etc.
- Gently massage your child's belly.

If your child has gas:

- Before starting the enema, remove air from the tubing. Do this by squeezing the drip chamber of the tubing to fill it halfway with fluid and let the fluid flow all the way to the end of the catheter (prime the tubing).
- If you think your child needs to release gas, put the catheter into your child's rectum before connecting it to the enema bag. This may help release gas.

Positioning on the toilet after the enema:

- Have your child sit with their feet on a step stool with their knees higher than their hips.
- Use a padded toilet seat to help cushion their bottom.
- Your child should sit for 45 minutes total. Let them take a short break halfway through to stretch their legs but have them stay close to the bathroom.