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## **PROCTOCOLITIS (Bloody Stools in Infants Caused by Food Allergy)**

### **WHAT IS IT?**

- This is a mild type of food allergy.
- It usually happens in infants who are breast fed and is caused by certain foods that the mother has eaten
- It can happen in infants on formula

### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?**

- The main symptom is blood mixed in the bowel movement
- The bowel movement may also look “mucousy”
- There is usually NO: pain, diarrhea, vomiting, anemia (low blood count) or growth problems

### **HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?**

- Usually by a medical history and examination.
  - Other causes of bleeding are considered by your doctor
- There is no simple laboratory test to know the problem food, so it is usually necessary to remove certain foods as a trial to see if the bleeding stops
- Sometimes, a doctor (gastroenterologist) needs to evaluate the problem by taking a biopsy (small snip using a tube) of the lining of the gut

### **HOW IS IT TREATED?**

- The main treatment is to remove certain foods from the mother’s diet or sometimes the infant’s diet
- The most common cause is cow’s milk, less commonly soy, egg or other foods
- Removal of the food should cause the bleeding to stop in a few days

### **WILL IT GO AWAY?**

- Yes, usually by age 9-12 months

### **WHAT SHOULD I ASK/TELL MY DOCTOR?**

- Let your doctor know of any new symptoms or worsening or continuation of symptoms
- Discuss making sure you are getting a nutritious diet
- Discuss how and when to re-introduce the food(s)

### **RESOURCES**

-This program has additional information sheets that you may find helpful  
-Explore additional educational materials, for example, the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network ([www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org))