

NAUSEA & VOMITING

WHAT IS IT?

NAUSEA is an uneasy sensation in the stomach that may or may not lead to vomiting.

VOMITING is the actual throwing up of the contents of the stomach. Sometimes vomiting happens without first being nauseous.

As many as 80% of cancer patients may be at risk for nausea and vomiting as a result of treatment.

TYPES

- **ACUTE:** Occurs in the first 24 hours after treatment.
- **DELAYED:** Occurs more than 24 hours and up to 7 days after treatment.
- **ANTICIPATORY:** A response to past experiences with nausea or vomiting from chemotherapy; often triggered by tastes, odors or thoughts of treatment.
- **BREAKTHROUGH:** Occurs even after receiving treatment that was intended to prevent it.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

Research shows that two and even three medications used together may be more effective than just one.

Commonly used medications include:

- aprepitant or fosaprepitant (Emend®)
- granisetron (Kytril®)
- lorazepam (Ativan®)
- metoclopramide (Reglan®)
- olanzapine (Zyprexa®)
- ondansetron (Zofran®)
- palonosetron (Aloxi®)
- prochlorperazine (Compazine®)
- promethazine (Anergan® or Phenergan®)
- rolapitant (VARUBI®)

RISK By far, the type of chemotherapy given is the main risk for developing nausea and/or vomiting.

Other risk factors include:

- Being a woman
- Being under the age of 50
- Drinking little or no alcohol
- Having a history of motion or morning sickness
- Experiencing prior nausea and vomiting from chemotherapy

WHY ADDRESS IT?

Besides feeling terrible, nausea and vomiting can cause poor nutrition, dehydration and get in the way of treatments or medications you are taking.



TIPS TO FEEL BETTER TODAY!

- Drink plenty of non-caffeinated fluids
- Wear clothing that is loose fitting around the waist
- Try relaxation techniques such as guided imagery, meditation or soothing music
- Distractions like music, reading or television can take your mind off of your symptoms
- Avoid smoking
- Be aware of and avoid triggers, such as strong odors
- "If it looks good and you can keep it down, go for it!"

MYTH

If you have nausea and/or vomiting, it means the treatment is working.

If you talk about your side effects, you will have to stop treatment.

Nausea and vomiting are just part of the chemotherapy experience. They aren't a big deal. It's okay to feel nauseous as long as you aren't vomiting.

TRUTH

Nausea and vomiting (or the lack of it) have nothing to do with the effect of your treatment.

Your treatment team wants to work with you to avoid nausea and vomiting so you can stay in treatment. These side effects can make you sick enough to want to go off of treatment as well.

Nausea and vomiting can have a serious impact on your physical health and quality of life. The goal is always to prevent them altogether.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Track your side effects and talk them over with your treatment team
- Don't be embarrassed to talk openly with your treatment team
- There is no one-size fits all; find ways to manage that work for you
- Prevention is key! Many of these effects can be anticipated and should be treated before or soon after they occur

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