



Managing Nausea and Vomiting

Around 15 - 20% of our patients will experience nausea or vomiting when starting this medication. This can make eating unpleasant and difficult, but it is important to try to eat as well as you can. The following ideas may help:

- If you feel sick first thing in the morning, try some plain biscuits or crackers or unbuttered toast before getting up
- Eat “little and often”. Aim to eat something 6 times a day if you can, even if it is just a plain biscuit and a glass of milk, or a small sandwich
- Avoid drinking whilst eating. Have drinks between or after meals
- Try to keep away from cooking smells. If possible, ask relatives or friends to prepare meals. Consider foods that don’t require much cooking, e.g. ‘ready meals’ heated up thoroughly in the microwave
- Don’t be over-faced by the food on your plate. Start with a small portion – you can always go back for more. This is very important if someone else is serving your food. Your small portion and their small portion may be very different!
- A short walk in the fresh air can help to reduce sickness
- Try foods containing ginger, e.g. ginger ale, ginger biscuits, ginger tea
- Cold foods have less smell than hot foods and may therefore be better tolerated. Try sandwiches, cold meats, crackers with cheese and cold puddings such as mousse, yoghurts and ice cream
- Very fatty foods (e.g. crisps, chips, fried foods) can cause nausea. If this is the case, try to avoid them and cut visible fat off food
- If very sweet foods cause nausea:
 - try sharp tasting fruits, e.g. unsweetened stewed apple or rhubarb with custard
 - plain chocolate is less sweet than milk chocolate
 - try tangy yoghurt drinks, fruit smoothies or lemon and lime cordials
- If your nausea does not settle, ask your doctor or nurse about anti-sickness tablets. If these are prescribed, ensure that you take them regularly as advised to prevent you from feeling sick

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Nausea and vomiting can happen for many reasons. When dealing with nausea and vomiting, eat what appeals to you and what you can tolerate. Get back to a healthy eating pattern once you feel better.

Tips to help with nausea

- Eat small meals and snacks often throughout the day instead of eating large amounts of food at one time. An empty stomach can make nausea worse.
- Eat slowly to keep from filling your stomach too quickly.
- Eat plain foods. Foods that are spicy, high in fat, or overly sweet can make nausea worse.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Try to drink fluids at least 30–60 minutes before or after meals instead of with the meal.
- Wear loose fitting clothing.
- Get lots of rest.
- Rinsing your mouth with water or mouthwash can help control unpleasant mouth taste that can make nausea worse.
- Some complementary treatments such as ginger, acupuncture, and acupressure may help reduce nausea. Talk with your healthcare provider before trying these treatments.

Avoid smells that bother you

- If possible, have someone else cook.
- Go outside, open a window, or use a fan to get fresh air before or during meals.
- Choose cold or room temperature foods and drinks. Try drinking with a straw if the smell is too strong.

Tips to help with vomiting

- Don't eat solid foods if you are vomiting. After you stop vomiting, start drinking small amounts of water or clear fluids every 10–30 minutes. This helps to replace the fluid you've lost. After 4 hours without vomiting, increase the amount as tolerated. Aim for 9–12 cups (2.25–3 L) of fluid every day when you feel better.
- Clear fluids include:
 - water
 - broth
 - ice pops
 - regular or diluted fruit juice or sports drinks (not caffeinated energy drinks)
 - soft drinks that are no longer fizzy
 - tea
- Once you can drink fluids without vomiting, try small amounts of bland foods such as:
 - canned or cooked fruit
 - crackers
 - graham wafers
 - hot cereal like plain oatmeal
 - mashed potatoes
 - white bread, toasted
 - white rice and pasta
- Return to eating a variety of foods as soon as possible.

