



Vomiting & Nausea

Signs & Symptoms

- **Vomiting** is throwing up the stomach's contents. Dry heaves may precede or follow vomiting.
- **Nausea** is when you feel like you're going to throw up.

Prevention

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially before you prepare food, eat, and after you use the toilet.
- Eat well, exercise regularly, and get plenty of rest to keep your immune system strong.



Get more information from:

Foodsafety.gov
www.foodsafety.gov

Causes

- Viruses in the intestines. Eating spoiled food or eating or drinking too much.
- A side effect of some medications, such as certain antibiotics.
- Motion sickness. Morning sickness in pregnant females.
- **Labyrinthitis**. This is inflammation of an area in the ear. Often, a respiratory infection causes this.
- **Migraine headaches**. (See at www.HealthyLearn.com.)
- **Acute glaucoma**. (See at www.HealthyLearn.com.)
- Stomach ulcers. (See **Peptic Ulcers** on previous page.)
- A blockage in the small or large intestine (bowel).
- A concussion from a head injury.
- **Hepatitis**. (See at www.HealthyLearn.com.)
- **Meningitis**. This is inflammation of membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.

Questions to Ask

With vomiting, do you have any of these problems?

- Any **heart attack warning sign** listed at www.HealthyLearn.com.
- One or more **symptoms of meningitis** listed at www.HealthyLearn.com.
- You vomit true, red blood or material that looks like coffee grounds.



NO

With vomiting, do you have any of these problems?

- Sudden, severe pain in and around one eye, blurred vision, headache, and you see rainbow-colored halos around lights.
- Fainting or decreased level of consciousness.
- A head or abdominal injury happened a short time ago.



NO

Do you have **signs of dehydration** listed at www.HealthyLearn.com?



NO

Flowchart continued on next page



Vomiting & Nausea, Continued

Do you have **symptoms of a kidney infection** listed at www.HealthyLearn.com?

YES



NO

Does very bad stomach pain last for more than 2 hours, interfere with daily activities, and keep hurting even after you vomit?

YES



NO

With vomiting, do the whites of your eyes or does your skin look yellow?

YES



NO

With vomiting or nausea, do you have **symptoms of a urinary tract infection** listed at www.HealthyLearn.com?

YES



NO

With nausea or vomiting, do you have ear pain or a feeling of fullness in an ear?

YES



NO

In a baby or small child, has the vomiting lasted 2 to 6 hours? For others, has the vomiting lasted longer than 12 hours without getting better?

YES



NO

Are you taking medicines that don't work if you vomit? High blood pressure pills are examples. Or, could you be pregnant?

YES



NO



Self-Care / Prevention

For Vomiting

- Don't smoke, drink alcohol, or take aspirin.
- Don't eat solid foods. Don't drink milk.

- Drink clear liquids at room temperature (not too hot or cold). Good examples are water; sport drinks, such as Gatorade; diluted fruit juices; ginger ale, etc. Take small sips. Drink only 1 to 2 ounces at a time. Stir carbonated beverages to get all the bubbles out before you sip them. Suck on ice chips if nothing else will stay down. {**Note:** For children, contact your child's doctor about using over-the-counter (OTC) mixtures, such as Pedialyte.}
- Gradually return to a regular diet, but wait about 8 hours from the last time you vomited. Start with foods like dry toast, crackers, rice, and other foods that are easy to digest. Or, eat foods as tolerated. Avoid greasy or fatty foods.

For Nausea Without Vomiting

- Drink clear liquids. Eat small amounts of dry foods, such as soda crackers, if they help.
- Avoid things that irritate the stomach, such as alcohol and aspirin.
- For motion sickness, use an over-the-counter medicine, such as Dramamine. You could also try Sea-Bands, a wrist band product that uses acupressure on a certain point on the wrist to control motion sickness. Sporting goods stores and drugstores sell Sea-Bands.



Get more information from:

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