
Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea (upset stomach) and vomiting (“throwing up”) are common side effects of cancer treatment. While this may make it difficult to eat, it is important that you eat to maintain strength and good nutrition during your treatment. In fact, nausea may actually worsen if you are not eating.

In most cases, these side effects are temporary, and will get better when your treatment is complete.

Tips for managing nausea and vomiting:

- Eat small meals or snacks every 2-3 hours throughout the day instead of three large meals.
- Eat simple and dry foods (crackers, dry cereal, toast). Pick foods that sound good to you.
- Avoid foods with strong smells. Cool and room temperature foods tend to have less odors.
- Avoid very sweet, spicy, fried, or greasy foods.
- Avoid food preparation areas to avoid being around strong food odors.
- Sip water, juices, or other clear liquids often during the day.
- Have frozen or prepared meals on hand so you do not have to cook when you feel nauseated.
- Keep small portions of your favorite foods on hand.
- Chewing gum or candy, especially tart candy, may help control nausea. Ask your dietitian if a nutrition supplement is right for you.

Additional tips to consider:

- Try to wait at least two hours after eating before lying down.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes. Avoid wearing tight-fitting clothes.
- Rinse your mouth before and after meals.
- Eat more between treatments when your appetite is better.
- Try slow, deep breathing to calm your stomach.
- Staying hydrated is very important. Try to drink 8 or more cups of liquids daily. For every episode of vomiting, drink ½ to 1 cup more liquid to prevent dehydration.

If these problems persist, talk to your health care team about other treatments or medicines that may help control nausea and vomiting.