

# What To Do

## About Feeling Sick to Your Stomach and Throwing Up (Nausea and Vomiting)



“I asked my doctor questions to make sure I knew when to take my medicine. The medicine really helped me.”

### What are nausea and vomiting?

Nausea is when you feel sick to your stomach, like you are going to throw up. Vomiting is when you throw up.

- **Drink enough liquids each day to prevent dehydration** (loss of too much water from the body).
- **Ask your doctor or nurse about medicine that will help. Learn how you should take the medicine.**

### Take these steps to feel better:

#### Take your anti-nausea medicine.

- Talk with your doctor or nurse about the best times and ways to take your medicine.
- Tell your nurse if the medicine is not helping. There are different kinds of medicine, and one may work better than another for you.




### Try tips to settle your stomach.

- Eat foods that are easy on your stomach. See the list on the other side of this sheet.
- Eat 5 to 6 small meals instead of 3 large meals each day.
- Eat and drink slowly.
- Don't lie down right after eating. Instead, sit up for a while.

### Avoid some foods.

- **Don't** eat greasy, fried, or spicy foods if you feel sick after eating them.
- **Don't** eat foods that are too hot or too cold if they make you sick to your stomach.
- If the smell of food bothers you, ask others to cook for you. Then let the food cool down before you eat it.

**These foods and drinks may be easy on your stomach until you feel better:**

Soups (clear liquids)	Drinks (clear liquids)	Meals and snacks	Fruits and sweets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear broth, such as chicken, vegetable, or beef</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear soda, such as ginger ale, that has gone flat or lost its fizz</li> <li>• Cranberry or grape juice</li> <li>• Oral rehydration solution drinks, such as Pedialyte®</li> <li>• Tea</li> <li>• Water</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken—broiled or baked, without the skin</li> <li>• Crackers</li> <li>• Cream of wheat or rice cereal</li> <li>• Noodles</li> <li>• Oatmeal</li> <li>• Potatoes—boiled, without the skin</li> <li>• Pretzels</li> <li>• White rice</li> <li>• White toast</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Angel food cake</li> <li>• Canned fruit, such as peaches and pears</li> <li>• Gelatin (such as Jell-O®)</li> <li>• Popsicles and sorbet</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> </ul> 

**Try these tips on treatment days:**

- Learn the best time for you to eat and drink. Some people find that it helps to eat a small snack before treatment. Others avoid eating or drinking right before treatment because it makes them feel sick.
- Listen to music or an audiobook before treatment, to help relax.

**Questions to ask your doctor or nurse:**

1. What problems should I call you about?
2. How should I take the medicine to prevent nausea and vomiting?
3. How much liquid should I drink each day?
4. What foods should I eat?
5. What foods should I avoid or have less of?
6. Could you give me the name of someone who can tell me about acupuncture and other things that may help prevent nausea?



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**How can we help?**

**National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service**

Phone: 1-800-422-6237 (1-800-4-CANCER)  
 Web: [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)  
 Online Chat: [www.cancer.gov/livehelp](http://www.cancer.gov/livehelp)

NCI has a series of 9 Radiation Therapy Side Effects Sheets at:  
[www.cancer.gov/radiation-side-effects](http://www.cancer.gov/radiation-side-effects)

