

Your Diet & Chemotherapy

Nausea, with or without vomiting, is a common side effect of chemotherapy. Some people have nausea or vomiting right after treatment; others experience a delay of one to three days. Many people never experience nausea at all.

If appropriate to your treatment, you will be given “anti-nausea” medications before your chemotherapy to prevent nausea. You may also be given a prescription for medication to be taken at home following your chemotherapy. Nausea and vomiting can almost always be controlled, or at least lessened, with medication.

If you experience nausea, there are several things you can do to help relieve it:

1. Try foods that are easy on your stomach such as:
 - Toast, crackers, pretzels
 - Yogurt, sherbet, jello, custard
 - Cream of wheat, rice, oatmeal
 - Boiled potatoes, noodles
 - Clear liquids, chicken broth, carbonated drinks
2. Avoid foods that:
 - Are fatty, greasy or fried
 - Are very sweet, such as candy, cookies or cake
 - Are spicy or hot
 - Have strong odors
3. Eat small amounts, eat often and chew slowly; eat before you get hungry because hunger can make the feeling of nausea stronger.
4. Suck on ice cubes, mints or tart candies.
5. Drink fewer liquids during meals; drinking liquids can cause a full, bloated feeling.
6. Eat food either cold or at room temperature since it has less odor and may be more appealing.
7. Loose clothing may be more comfortable at mealtime.
8. Avoid eating in a room that is too warm or stuffy; fresh air can be helpful when eating.
9. Rest sitting up (don't lie flat) for at least two hours after you've finished eating a meal.

REMEMBER: if nausea and/or vomiting persist, a change in anti-nausea medication may help. Contact your doctor or nurse for help in managing nausea and vomiting.