

Nausea is that unpleasant, sick to your stomach feeling that often precedes vomiting. Nausea and vomiting usually occur together. Vomiting can lead to dehydration and body electrolyte imbalances. Repeated or persistent nausea and vomiting, which interferes with your ability to take your medication means you should consult your medical or health professional. Nausea is one of the most common side effects in positive people. There are many causes of nausea including different medications so it is important to consider steps to minimise these.

The causes of nausea can be:

- Hunger or low blood sugar levels
- Stress
- Bacterial, viral or other infections
- Lack of water
- Certain foods that the individuals body cannot tolerate such as - caffeine, wheat, red wine, cheese, chocolate, dairy products, fats
- The use of certain antiretroviral drugs such as:
 - AZT (Retrovir, Combivir and Trizivir)
 - 3TC (Epivir, Combivir and Trizivir)
 - abacavir (Ziagen and Trizivir)
 - ritonavir (Norvir)
 - saquinavir (Fortovase)
 - indinavir (Crixivan)
 - amprenavir (Agenerase)

Ensure you know and understand the requirements of your particular medication, as some need to be taken with food and some on an empty stomach. The feeling of nausea often stops with a change of medication or with the prescription of anti-nausea medication. You should never stop your medication to prevent side effects unless you have been advised to by your medical or health professional.

When you have feelings of nausea you should avoid:

- Greasy, fatty or fried food
- Foods with a strong odour
- Hot, spicy foods
- Food or drink with high sugar content
- Allergy foods known to the individual

If vomiting occurs:

- Ensure adequate fluid intake
- Eat soups, broth or 'soft' foods
- Drink herb teas such as ginger, peppermint or chamomile
- If vomiting is a regular, frequent occurrence talk to your medical or health professional about the benefits and risks of anti-nausea medications

There are some pharmaceutical medications available over the counter which can help to relieve nausea. Consult your medical or health professional to make sure they do not interact with your other prescribed medications.

To prevent the occurrence of nausea try strategies such as:

- **Eating small, frequent meals - six small meals rather than three large meals**
- **Having frequent snacks to prevent the dropping of your blood sugar level and the complete emptying of your stomach (refer to Nutrition link for snack ideas).**
- **Leaving dry crackers by your bed and eating them when you wake before getting out of bed**
- **Drinking peppermint, chamomile or ginger tea to calm your stomach**
- **Chewing food slowly**
- **Ensuring the atmosphere in which you eat is calm and relaxed**
- **Sitting up at a table when you are eating**
- **Not lying down or going to bed until one or two hours after eating**
- **Avoiding the kitchen while food is being cooked to limit your exposure to the smells produced**
- **Sniffing grated lemon peel or drinking water with lemon in it just before eating**
- **Substituting cool, bland, odourless foods for hot, spicy, smelly foods**
- **Eating more dry and salty foods such as toast, crackers and cereal**
- **Ensuring that what you are eating is nutritionally 'valuable' and can provide as many essential nutrients as possible**

**nausea
(contd.)**

The information provided assists in self-management and is intended as recommendations only. For more information please see your medical or health professional.



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South Australia**