



# Caring for someone with Nausea and Vomiting

**Nausea and vomiting are very common symptoms** and can be caused by physical and psychological conditions and a wide range of factors. Nausea and vomiting may occur separately or together. Diarrhea, constipation, and stomach pain can often cause nausea and vomiting. The most common causes of nausea are intense pain.

Nausea is a feeling of “being sick to your stomach” or having an “upset stomach.” You may find that certain smells bring on the feeling of nausea.

Vomiting or “throwing up” is when food or fluids in the stomach are forcefully expelled through your mouth.

Your nurse can call your doctor for medication to manage nausea and vomiting. Talk with your nurse about what may be best for you, and read some helpful tips below:

## Things you can do for nausea and vomiting:

1. Be still when you feel sick. Sometimes moving around can make nausea worse.
2. Sit or lie down with your head elevated 30 – 45 degrees for at least 2 hours after eating.
3. To get rid of the bad taste in your mouth, suck on hard candy, peppermints, or chew gum.

## Questions or concerns?

Call a hospice nurse at 513-891-7700. For caregiving tips visit [www.HospiceofCincinnati.org/for-the-caregiver](http://www.HospiceofCincinnati.org/for-the-caregiver).



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4. Keep your room free from strong odors that can trigger nausea and vomiting.
5. Fresh air through an open window is often helpful.
6. Eat small meals frequently throughout the day to keep food in your stomach.
7. Try relaxation strategies such as deep breathing, soothing music or imagery.
8. Use distractions such as watching TV, listening to the radio or visiting with others.

## What to do after vomiting:

1. Use a mouth rinse to eliminate the sour and unpleasant taste.
2. Rest your stomach for a few hours by not eating anything.
3. Drink frequent small sips such as:
  - a. Water or weak herbal tea; 7Up or Sprite—after the bubbles are gone.
  - b. Mix 1/2 water with 1/2 fruit juices like cranberry and apple.
  - c. Avoid acidic drinks such as orange juice or coffee.
4. When you begin to eat again, start with Jello, soda crackers, toast, rice, cooked cereals, soups, baked or mashed potatoes (no butter), applesauce and bananas.

## What to share with your care team:

It's helpful to keep a diary to help your nurse develop a plan of care for you:

1. When and how long were you nauseated?
2. Does it occur after you eat or on an empty stomach?
3. What helps and what makes it worse?
4. When was your last bowel movement?
5. What is the consistency of your bowel movement?

**Because constipation can be a reason for nausea and vomiting, taking the medications your doctor prescribed for constipation is very important.**

## Call your hospice nurse at 513-891-7700 if:

1. The medication and/or tips do not relieve the nausea or vomiting.
2. Vomiting occurs shortly after taking your medications. Your nurse can help you determine if you should replace the dose that was vomited.
3. You have blood in your vomit or stools/bowel movement.
4. You develop severe stomach pain.

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