Nausea-Vomiting-Diarrhea

The usual cause of nausea/vomiting/diarrhea is a virus that has infected the gastrointestinal tract (stomach and intestines) and it will generally resolve on its own within 24-72 hours (1-3 days). Antibiotics will not cure or lessen the effects of a viral gastrointestinal infection.

Self Care Treatment for Nausea, Vomiting, and Diarrhea:

Do not worry about eating food at this time. Our bodies can tolerate a day or two without food, but we must continually replace the liquids that we normally lose and more so when we lose liquids due to vomiting and/or diarrhea.

- Only drink “sips” of liquid (water, juice (apple/grape), broth) or swallow small “nibbles” of jello or popsicles.
  - Every 10 minutes sip/nibble a slightly larger amount than the last and continue progressing in this manner as long as the vomiting/diarrhea does not start again.
  - If at any time you start vomiting or having diarrhea, then wait 30 minutes after it stops and restart the liquids as stated above.
  - If you have 4 continuous hours of ingesting increasingly larger amounts of liquid without having vomiting or diarrhea, then begin to eat simple, bland foods (BRATC—banana, rice, applesauce, toast, crackers). If you are able to tolerate these foods without vomiting or diarrhea, then slowly progress to a regular diet over 24 hours.

Absolutely avoid citrus fruits and juices, milk, greasy and/or spicy foods, coffee, raw veggies and all alcohol.

- Medications: Diphenhydramine (generic Benadryl) 25 to 50 mg. (one or two capsules) can be taken every 4 to 6 hours. This drug tends to produce drowsiness. For headache or fever, take 2 Tylenol every 4 to 6 hours. These two medications can be taken together without any problems.
- Medications: Pepto Bismol tablets, as directed, may relieve diarrhea. Keep in mind that Pepto Bismol contains aspirin. This drug will also cause temporary darkening of the bowel movements and a brownish coating on the tongue. Follow the package dosing instructions.

If you have no nausea or vomiting, you may continue with a normal diet. However, avoid those foods that normally give you loose stools or diarrhea. Bananas, rice, applesauce, strong tea and toast may help to form up loose or watery stools.

Important Points for Concern:

- Signs of dehydration include: infrequent urinating, or in small amounts, of dark yellow urine; headache with a feeling of mental fuzziness or dizziness; fatigue; dry mouth and lips; decreased sweating; and thirst.

- See a health care provider or seek Emergency Care if:
  - The vomiting and diarrhea have persisted for greater than 48 hours
  - You have any significant abdominal or back pain
  - You notice blood in the vomit or diarrhea
  - You notice that your diarrhea or bowel movements are a blackish or maroon color and you are not taking Pepto Bismol
  - The diarrhea and vomiting occur one or more times hourly for 24 hours or more
  - You have any signs of dehydration (see above)
  - You have any concerns not addressed in this pamphlet
Self Care for Nausea-Vomiting Diarrhea