



Managing feeling and being sick (nausea)

This information is intended as a guide to help you deal with feeling or being sick (nausea) until you can talk to your doctor. It is not intended to replace medical advice. If you are currently taking anti-sickness medicines and you are still feeling sick, you should tell your doctor. There are many other brands available and changing brand may help.

Surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy and some medicines are all treatments which may cause you to feel sick. Cancer patients often complain of this symptom. However it is usually temporary. It is important to try to take some food during this time, as being hungry can sometimes make the feelings worse.

The following tips may help to overcome these feelings and help you to eat:

- Try to avoid preparing or eating food when you feel sick. Use ready-meals/tinned foods
- Accept an offer to have food made for you
- Try to keep away from cooking smells. Microwave cooking produces less smell. You may want to try eating ready prepared meals. Some patients find that eating cold food and drinks is easier as they have less smell
- Avoid eating greasy/fried food and hot/spicy foods
- Try to have food which you fancy and eat smaller meals more often .e.g. 6 small snacks per day
- Keep meals fairly dry
- Don't drink a lot before meals, or with meals. Wait for half an hour after food before having a drink
- When drinking, try taking sips slowly. Some patients find sipping a fizzy drink such as soda, dry ginger ale or ginger tea can help
- Try getting some fresh air before meals to distract you from the thought of food and avoid tight or restrictive clothing

- If you feel sick in the morning, try eating a cracker or a dry biscuit before getting out of bed
- Try rinsing your mouth with fizzy water between meals
- Sucking ice cubes
- Good mouth care is important so gently clean your mouth and teeth after every meal
- Try to sit down and relax, and avoid lying down immediately after eating

Can complementary therapies help?

Acupressure bands (available from chemist) can help to control feelings of sickness. These apply pressure to specific parts of the body, usually the wrist.

Complementary therapy and relaxation sessions may also help. Please ask in the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre for more details or see leaflet PI 16 A Patient's Guide to Complementary Therapies at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre.

Can I be prescribed anti-sickness tablets?

Remember to tell your doctor about your symptoms. If they continue you may be prescribed anti-sickness tablets.

Further information about feeling and being sick

Information is available from Macmillan Cancer Support in the following:

- Controlling nausea and vomiting (anti-emetic therapy) Macmillan Factsheet.
- Types of anti-sickness drugs; How you take anti-sickness drugs; Side effects of anti-sickness drugs – Cancer Research UK leaflets.

These are available from the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre or from Macmillan Cancer Support website www.macmillan.org.uk

If you would like further advice please contact the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre Dietitian, Tel: 01923 844366.