Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea is a sick feeling that often comes before throwing up (*vomiting*). Vomiting is a reflex where stomach contents come out of your mouth. Vomiting can cause severe loss of body fluids (*dehydration*). Children and elderly adults dehydrate quickly, especially if they also have diarrhea.

CAUSES

- Upsetting smells, sounds, or sights.
- Motion sickness.
- Pregnancy.
- Breathing in smoke or bad fumes.
- Head injuries.
- Infections.
- Food poisoning.
- Alcohol.
- Belly (*abdominal*) problems.
- Migraine headaches.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Take all medicine as directed by your caregiver.
- If you do not have an appetite, do not force yourself to eat.
- If you have an appetite, eat a normal diet unless your caregiver tells you differently.
  - Eat a variety of complex carbohydrates (rice, wheat, potatoes, bread), lean meats, yogurt, fruits, and vegetables.
  - Avoid high fat foods because they are more difficult to digest.
- Fluids are less likely to cause nausea. They can also prevent dehydration.
- Watch for signs of dehydration:
  - Severe thirst.
  - Dry lips and mouth.
  - Dizziness.
  - Dark urine.
  - Decreasing urine frequency and amount.
  - Confusion.
  - Rapid breathing or pulse.
- If any of the above signs of dehydration are present, an oral rehydration solution (ORS) should be started as directed by your caregiver. A more rapid treatment may be necessary for the elderly.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have blood or brown flecks (like coffee grounds) in your vomit.
- You have a severe headache or stiff neck.
- You are confused.
- You have severe abdominal pain.
- You do not urinate every 8 hours.
- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 102º F (38.9º C) or higher.
- **Your baby is 3 months old or younger with a rectal temperature of 100.4º F (38º C) or higher.**

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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