

Managing Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea and vomiting are described as possible side effects of almost all treatments for breast cancer. Some people never experience these sensations, while others do regularly. If you suffer from nausea related to your breast cancer treatment, experiment with the ideas below. Try to eat intuitively when you're not feeling well, listening to your body's cues for what to eat rather than by any cultural norms. Some people become disappointed if nausea prevents them from eating their typically healthy diet. Remember that these side-effects are temporary, as are any diet changes you need to make to get through this time.

Tips for Managing Nausea:

- Ginger is used as an herbal remedy for stomach aches and nausea, and some studies have found it to be effective for treating chemotherapy-induced nausea. When nauseous, try chewing on a small piece of fresh, peeled ginger root. If this flavor is too intense, as it is for many people, try drinking ginger teas (which you can make yourself with the following recipe or incorporating ginger into the foods you eat.
 - **Ginger-Peppermint Tea**
(Adapted from *The Cancer Fighting Kitchen* by Rebecca Katz)
Bring 4 cups of water and 4 ½-inch slices of peeled fresh ginger to a boil in a saucepan, then lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat, and add 1 peppermint tea bag. Steep for 10 minutes. Remove the tea bag and serve with a slice of fresh lemon and a drop of agave for sweetness, if desired. Serve warm or iced, after placing in the refrigerator until cool.
- The smell of citrus is calming and may help to settle stomach discomfort. Slice a piece of a citrus fruit and position it close to you while you inhale and exhale deeply. Examples of citrus fruits are: lemons, limes, grapefruit, and oranges.
- Keep sliced citrus fruit, grapes and berries in the freezer and try sucking on these when you experience a bout of nausea. Similarly, sucking on a hard fruit-candy, ice-pop, or sorbet may be relieving.
- Do not go long periods of time without eating as this may worsen or initiate stomach discomfort. You may find that having small amounts of food throughout the day can help to prevent nausea. Keep snacks with you at all times.
- Do not force yourself to eat foods that do not seem appetizing. Often, foods that are rich or heavily spiced will be more difficult to eat than light or bland foods.
- Avoid food smells from kitchens, cafeterias, or restaurants, and ask others to prepare your meals for you.
- Drink fluids regularly throughout the day. Even if you do not vomit, nausea may keep you from meeting your regular fluid needs. Adding a slice of citrus (lemon, orange, lime, etc.) or a sprig of fresh mint may make water more appealing. Additionally, soups serve as hydrating meals.
- Recognize times, foods, smells, or events that trigger your nausea, and alter your routine to lessen their impact.
- Eat simple or bland foods on your chemotherapy treatment days, and avoid eating an hour or two before your treatment.
- Some people experience nausea before chemotherapy treatment, called "anticipatory nausea." If this is a problem for you, consider practicing breathing or meditation techniques.