

13. Nausea or Vomiting

Nausea and vomiting can often occur either due to the cancer or following treatments such as chemotherapy or radiotherapy. However, it can also be caused by other factors such as: constipation, some painkillers, pain, infection or stomach irritation.

What can be done to manage the nausea and vomiting?

- It is important to discuss your symptoms with your Oncology Doctor so that they can identify the reason for your nausea and choose the correct treatment for you. They may be able to prescribe anti-sickness medication and/or alter your treatment.
- It is important to drink plenty, taking small sips, but don't drink too much just before you eat. Even if you cannot manage food it is important to keep drinking. Some people find chilled, fizzy and iced drinks (sipped slowly or through a straw) can be easier; e.g. tonic water, mineral water, lemonade.
- Try to avoid eating, drinking or preparing food when you feel sick. If possible let someone else prepare and cook your food.
- Try to eat small snacks and meals regularly through the day, rather than large meals. It may help to avoid very fatty foods or those that have a strong smell. Cold or room temperature foods (e.g. dry toast or crackers, tinned fruit and ice cream, biscuits, cereal) may be preferable.
- Sit upright whenever possible and eat slowly.
- Remedies such as ginger and peppermint are often helpful in controlling nausea.
- Cold foods and snacks may be preferable to hot meals because they generally have a less strong smell. Avoid fatty foods if they upset you.
- Nausea and vomiting can be worse if you are feeling anxious or worried and relaxation techniques can help with this. *(See Worry, fear or anxiety elsewhere in this directory.)*
- Pain can induce the feeling of nausea so ensure that any pain you have is well controlled. *(See Pain elsewhere in this directory.)*
- You may find that your treatment makes things taste different than before, which could increase the feeling of nausea. *(See Changes in how things taste elsewhere in this directory.)*
- Sometimes the large number of medicines people take causes them to feel sick. If this is the case speak to your doctor or pharmacist about the best way to take your medication.
- Some complementary therapies may help with nausea such as hypnotherapy and acupuncture (some find the use of acupressure bracelets or "Seabands" helpful).

Local Resources:

Resource	Contact Details
Mustard Tree Cancer Support & Triangle Drop In Centres Ask questions, share concerns, offers a range of services including benefits advice. Support, advice and information for cancer patients and their carers	Mustard Tree, Derriford Hospital: Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm 01752 430060/01752 431468 Kingsbridge: Tuesdays 10am to 4pm 01548 852349 Liskeard: Thursdays 10am to 4pm 01579 373500 Tavistock: Fridays 10am to 4pm 01822 615935
Wiltshire Farm Foods Large selection of frozen meals can be ordered (online or telephone) and delivered straight to your front door	Wiltshire Farm Foods Website: www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) Tel: 0800 0663366
Oakhouse Foods Meals and groceries that can be ordered online or over the telephone and delivered directly to your door	Oakhouse Foods Website: www.oakhousefoods.co.uk Tel: 0333 3702514
Other Resources	Your GP, Oncology Doctor, Specialist Nurse, District Nurse or Dietician.

National Resources:

Resource	Contact details
Macmillan Cancer Support Provides information on nausea	http://www.macmillan.org.uk/Cancerinformation/Livingwithandaftercancer/Symptomssideeffects/Othersymptomssideeffects/Nauseavomiting.aspx
The Royal Marsden Hospital website Provides information on nausea	https://www.royalmarsden.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/files_trust/nausea-and-vomiting_1.pdf
Macmillan Cancer Support Provide comprehensive advice and information on all aspects of cancer.	www.macmillan.org.uk 0808 808 0000 (Mon-Fri, 9am-8pm)

Further information:

Macmillan Cancer Support booklets: – available free from the Mustard Tree Macmillan Centre
Cancer and complementary therapies
Controlling the symptoms of cancer
Healthy Eating and Cancer
Understanding chemotherapy
Understanding radiotherapy