



Dealing with Nausea, Vomiting and Poor Appetite

By Theresa Galvin, MS, RDN, CD-N

Vestibular patients seem to be at significant risk for nausea, vomiting and anorexia (poor appetite). Often, they can become interrelated, creating a vicious cycle. The following are some dietary tips for managing these three factors.

ACUTE NAUSEA AND VOMITING

It is important to rest the stomach and yet still avoid dehydration. Initially, steer clear of any foods and beverages and try ice chips only. When you know you can tolerate those, then progress your diet slowly. Clear fluids should be attempted for the first 24 hours, advancing as tolerated.

Clear fluids are easy for the stomach to absorb and include:

- Water
- Sport drinks
- Clear broths
- Popsicles
- Jell-O
- Flat ginger ale
- Coconut water

Don't take too much fluid at one. One to two ounces of fluid at a time, taken every 10-15 minutes, may be all that the stomach will be able to tolerate.

Avoid milk products for the first 24-48 hours during an episode of nausea and vomiting.

Talk to your medical provider about the use of an anti-emetic medication, e.g. Zofran, Reglan or Compazine.

CHRONIC NAUSEA & VOMITING

If you are experiencing acute vomiting, follow the guidelines outlines above. If you are having chronic bouts of nausea and/or vomiting, try these tips:

- Eat small, frequent meals
- Eat and drink slowly
- Try well tolerated foods such as toast, crackers, yogurt, cream of wheat, oatmeal, boiled potatoes, rice, noodles, clear liquids, and carbonated drinks
- Avoid fatty, greasy, or fried foods
- Avoid foods that are very sweet, spicy, or have strong odors
- Do not lie flat for at least 2 hours after eating
- Eat foods cold or at room temperature
- Avoid eating in a room that is stuffy or warm
- Avoid liquids at meal times; drink 1/2 hour before or after eating
- Rinse your mouth before and after meals to get rid of any bad tastes that may make you nauseated
- Ask someone to cook for you or order take-out so you can avoid strong smells that may be unpleasant for you
- Consider ginger and/or peppermint products (see below)
- Consider complementary and holistic techniques such as acupuncture,

relaxation and visualization to reduce nausea

GINGER IS YOUR FRIEND!

Asian, Indian, and Arabic medical traditions have used ginger as an herbal remedy to treat nausea, diarrhea, and stomach aches for thousands of years.

Also used as a cooking spice, ginger root can be used fresh or dried. Its oil can be distilled from the root and is available as an extract, tincture, capsule, and oil. Use fresh ginger root to make tea. You can also place fresh slices under your tongue for getting through acute or chronic nausea. Walking around with a supply of ginger candies can help ward off some low-grade nausea.

The Ginger People is a product line that offers many options for ingesting ginger:

- Arjuna Ginger Bar
- Ginger Rescue
- Gin Gins® Candies
- Beverages
- Cooking Sauces
- Confections
- Crystallized Ginger
- Pantry Essentials
- Gluten-Free Products
- Vegan Products

PEPPERMINT MAY ALSO BE YOUR FRIEND!

Drinking peppermint tea (non-caffeinated), or using fresh peppermint in drinks or on food products like watermelon, yogurt or salads can be refreshing as well as comforting. Walking around with mints in your pocket (e.g. Altoids Extra Strong mints) may be a good strategy. Also, although there is no clear evidence that they are helpful,

dietary supplements containing peppermint oil have been long thought to effective. However, be cautioned that peppermint oil may cause side effects such as heartburn and may interact with certain medications. Talk to your health care provider before using peppermint oil.

If you can't ingest peppermint because it bothers your stomach, or your healthcare provider has advised against (as in Gastric Reflux), you can simply use inhalation therapy.

SIMPLE INHALATION

For this remedy, apply a couple drops peppermint or lavender oil on to a tissue, on your hands, or in a paper bag.

Inhale and enjoy.

Alternatively, you could use an essential oil diffuser and vaporize these oils inside your room.

POOR APPETITE (ANOREXIA)

Poor appetite (anorexia) makes it hard to eat enough, resulting in weight and nutrient loss. Here are some common concerns and tips on how to manage them.

- Eat small amounts of food at least six times a day. Try to eat every two to three hours.
- When you go out, carry snacks that won't spoil, such as crackers, bananas and nuts.
- Try some light exercise such as walking. This may make you want to eat more.
- Ask your medical provider about medicine that can make your appetite stronger.

- Nutritional supplements can help you meet caloric needs when your appetite is not good. These come in powders, liquids, puddings or bars. They are best used as a snack between meals. It is preferable that you not use them to replace your meals.

If your appetite changes, or if you have symptoms like nausea/vomiting, it may become hard to eat. Be sure to let your medical provider know how you are feeling. Ask for a referral to a Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist to help you make healthy food choices.

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5018 NE 15TH AVE · PORTLAND, OR 97211 · FAX: (503) 229-8064 · (800) 837-8428 · INFO@VESTIBULAR.ORG · VESTIBULAR.ORG

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