

Managing Nausea and Vomiting

When dealing with nausea and vomiting, eat what appeals to you. Get back to a healthy eating pattern once you feel better. The tips below may help you manage when you are nauseous or vomiting.

Tips to manage nausea

- Try to eat small meals and snacks often throughout the day, instead of eating large amounts of food at one time. An empty stomach can make nausea worse.
- Eat slowly to keep your stomach from filling too quickly.
- Eat plain foods. Foods that are spicy, high in fat, or high in added sugar can make nausea worse.
- Try food and drink at different temperatures. For some people, cold foods and fluids may be easier. For others, room temperature food and fluids may be easier. See what works best for you.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Limit caffeine such as coffee, black tea, energy drinks, and cola.
- Do not have solid foods and fluids at the same time of meal. Try to drink fluids at least 30–60 minutes before or after meals. Drinking fluids with meals can make you feel full which can make nausea worse.
- Eating ginger root and getting acupuncture or acupressure may help reduce nausea. Talk with your healthcare team before trying these treatments.

Avoid strong smells

- If possible, have someone else cook.
- Go outside, open a window, or use a fan to get fresh air before or during meals.
- Choose cold or room temperature foods and drinks.
- Try drinking with a straw if the smell is too strong.



Tips to manage vomiting

- After you have stopped vomiting, sip on water or other fluids every 10–30 minutes. This helps to replace the lost fluid. After 4 hours without vomiting, gradually increase the amount you drink.
- Examples of fluids to try:
 - water
 - 100% fruit juice or sports drinks (regular and diluted)
 - flavoured gelatin like Jell-O®
 - frozen pops or Popsicles®
 - pudding
 - oral rehydration solutions (ORS), like G2®
 - pop (caffeine free)
 - soup or broth
 - tea
- Once you can drink fluids without vomiting, try eating small amounts of dry, starchy, or bland foods, such as:
 - canned or cooked fruit
 - crackers
 - graham wafers
 - hot cereal, like plain wheat cereal
 - mashed or boiled potatoes
 - pretzels
 - white bread or toast, rice, and pasta
- Return to eating a variety of foods as soon as you feel well.

Mouth care after vomiting

Wait at least 30 minutes to brush your teeth after vomiting. Stomach acids can harm the surfaces of teeth. This is made worse if you brush your teeth sooner.

Use a solution of 1 teaspoon (6 g) baking soda in 1 cup (250 mL) water. Rinse your mouth then spit it out.

If you don't have baking soda, rinse with water only.

Drink fluids

When you are nauseous or have stopped vomiting

- Sip on fluids even if you don't feel thirsty.



Check out ahs.ca/Recipes for ORS recipes you can make at home to help stay hydrated.

Lifestyle changes

You may find relief with these tips:

- Wear loose clothing or clothes that are loose around your waist.
- Eat slowly.
- Sit upright for about 30 minutes after eating.
- Rinse your mouth with water or non-alcohol-based mouthwash before and after you eat. This may help get rid of unpleasant mouth tastes that can make nausea worse.
- Try to get enough sleep and rest.

When to talk to your doctor

Call Health Link (811) or talk your doctor if you:

- Have been vomiting for more than 24 hours or unable to keep fluids down.
- Are vomiting and have a fever.
- Are taking any new medications or drugs (may have nausea or vomiting as side-effects).
- Have pain, bloating or a swollen stomach, and you don't feel better after vomiting.
- Are showing signs of dehydration:
 - dry mouth, lips, or eyes
 - dizziness, or feeling lightheaded
 - fatigue, or being more tired than usual
 - headache
 - peeing less



Hyperemesis gravidarum (HG) is a severe form of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy.

If you are experiencing HG, see your healthcare team for ongoing support and monitoring.

Nausea and vomiting during pregnancy



Nausea and vomiting are common during pregnancy. It can happen at any time during the day or night and may last for a few weeks or the entire pregnancy.

Include food and drinks that you enjoy and are safe in pregnancy.

In addition to the tips already suggested, try some of these:

- Choose lower fat, higher protein foods.
- Eat before getting out of bed and when nausea is mild.
- Eat before, or as soon as you feel hungry. An empty stomach may make nausea worse.



Many herbs, supplements, and medications are marketed for use with nausea and vomiting. **These may not be safe in pregnancy.**

Check with your healthcare team **before** taking anything when pregnant.

More information



For more information specific to pregnancy, check out this [Pregnancy \(video\)](#) on MyHealthAlberta.ca

More support



- Talk to your healthcare team.
- Call Health Link at 811 and ask to talk to a dietitian or complete a [self-referral form](#) on ahs.ca/811.
- Visit ahs.ca/Nutrition.