

# NAUSEA AND VOMITING



# DEFINITIONS

- Nausea is the sensation of being about to vomit. It can occur alone or accompany vomiting, indigestion, or other gastrointestinal symptoms.
- Vomiting is the forceful expulsion of gastric (stomach) contents.
- Regurgitation is the return of contents from the esophagus to the back of the throat with little effort.

# CAUSES

Numerous factors can trigger nausea. For example, some people have increased sensitivity to sounds, smells, tastes, medicines, and the impacts of certain medical disorders. The most common causes will be covered on the following slides.



# CAUSES: MEDICATIONS AND OTHER AGENTS



- Chemotherapy
- Pain medications
- Some heart medications
- Hormones such as oral contraceptives
- Antibiotics (especially sulfa, erythromycin, tetracycline)
- Anticonvulsants, theophylline,
- Antiparkinsonian drugs

# INFECTIOUS CAUSES

- Viral infections
- Bacterial infections
  - Especially ear infections
- Food poisoning



# CAUSES – DISORDERS OF THE GUT



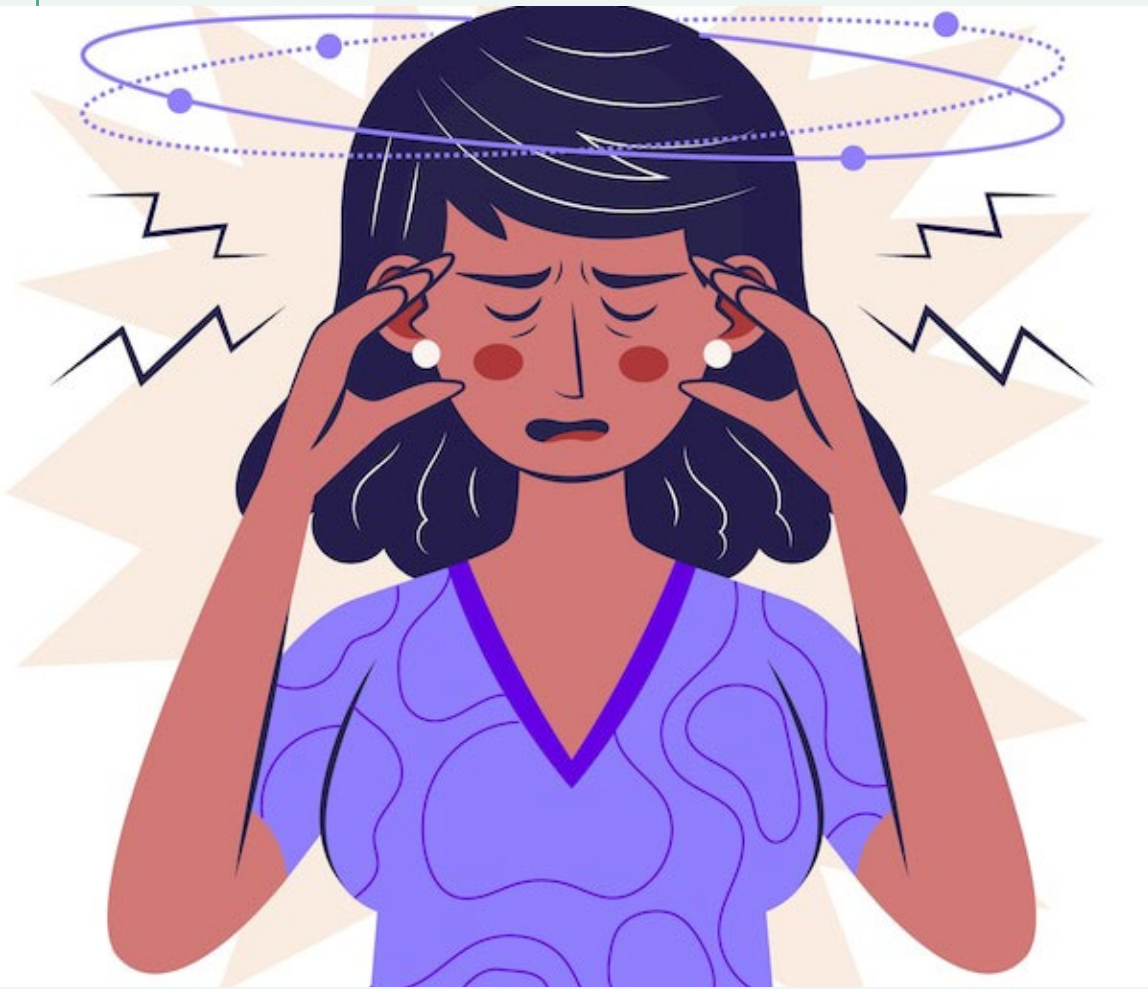
- Bowel obstruction
- Slow emptying of stomach
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Ulcer, dyspepsia, GERD
- Pancreatitis
- Hepatitis
- Gall bladder disease
- Cancer

# CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM CAUSES

- Migraine headaches
- Seizure disorders
- Infections such as meningitis
- Brain tumor, stroke or other brain trauma
- Anxiety disorders, depression
- Pain, especially acute pain



# CAUSES – INNER EAR DISORDERS



- Motion sickness
- Labyrinthitis or Meniere disease
- Tumors



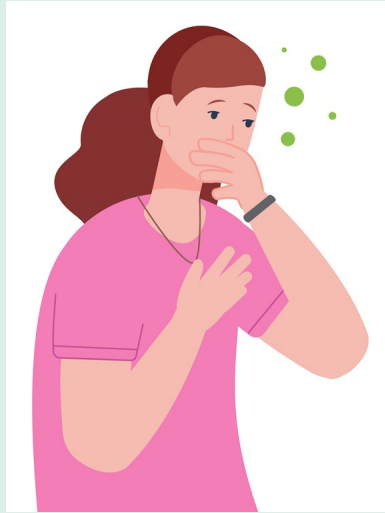


# CAUSES – MISCELLANEOUS

- Pregnancy
- Metabolic disorders such as hyperthyroidism
- Liver or kidney failure
- Postoperative nausea and vomiting
- Cyclic vomiting
- Some cardiac diseases
- Starvation (anorexia)
- Bad smells



# SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF NAUSEA



Nausea itself is a symptom, but there are other symptoms associated with it including:

- Vomiting or feeling like you are about to vomit
- Lack of appetite
- Excess saliva in the mouth
- Sweating or cold sweats
- Retching, or repeated, uncontrollable contractions of abdominal and respiratory muscles
- Abdominal discomfort
- Lightheadedness
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Burping

# DURATION

The cause of the nausea determines how long symptoms last.

Nausea brought on by a stomach flu will typically start to improve within a day.

However, nausea and vomiting from food poisoning can last up to 48 hours.



# WHEN TO GET HELP

If symptoms of nausea and/ or vomiting last 2 days or if the person is not able to take in any fluids; medical attention should be sought immediately.

Medical help should be obtained even sooner if the following signs or symptoms are present:

- Abdomen or chest pain
- Throwing up blood or something that looks like tar
- Bowel movements that are bloody or black
- Temperature over 101 degrees F
- Severe headache or stiff neck
- Very fatigued or difficulty getting up or staying awake
- Signs of dehydration
  - Being very thirsty, having dry mouth or tongue
  - Muscle cramps
  - Excessive fatigue, dizziness or confusion
  - Urine is very dark yellow or no urination in over 5 hours



# SELF-CARE TREATMENT

- Sit down, relax – too much activity might worsen nausea.
- Stay hydrated - drink short sips of cool, clear, carbonated, or sour liquids like water, ginger ale, lemonade, or soda every 5 to 10 minutes.
- Avoid eating or drinking for 15 to 20 minutes after vomiting.
- Avoid smells with a strong scent - smoke, perfume, and the scent of food can trigger nausea.
- Eat bland meals - start with simple-to-digest items like rice, crackers, toast, applesauce, and bananas.
- Do not eat anything hot or greasy as it may worsen nausea.
- Consider taking an over-the-counter medication for nausea.





# COMPLICATIONS

Nausea and vomiting can lead to:

- dehydration
- electrolyte abnormalities  
(loss of sodium and potassium)
- changes in drug levels
  - especially concerning with antiseizure medications
- aspiration of vomitus
- lowering of the seizure threshold

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