



SURGEONS CHOICE

MEDICAL CENTER

NAUSEA AND VOMITING AFTER SURGERY: CARE INSTRUCTIONS

Some people may feel sick to their stomach (nausea) or even throw up (vomit) after having surgery. Nausea and vomiting can be a common side effect of anesthesia or pain medicine. Nausea and vomiting after surgery can last up to 48 hours. However, if nausea or vomiting persists for more than 24 hours or you throw up more than two times, please call your doctor. There is medication that can help.

What can I do to prevent nausea and vomiting?

- Dehydration can increase nausea so please drink 6-8 glasses of water per day for the first two days after surgery. If needed, take small sips, ice chips or popsicles, apple juice or electrolyte beverages like Gatorade to ensure you are getting enough liquids. Avoid acidic drinks like orange juice and caffeinated beverages.
- Severe pain can cause nausea or vomiting so please take your pain medication as prescribed.
- A common side effect of narcotics can be nausea so please take your pain medications with food to reduce this.

What can I do to relieve nausea and vomiting?

- Flat ginger ale can help calm the stomach.
- Eat clear soups, crackers, dry toast, rice, bananas or apple sauce.
- If vomiting, lay on your left side if possible and rest your stomach for an hour or so. Then try liquids again, progress to crackers or dry toast and then regular food when you are feeling better.
- If you had abdominal surgery, please apply gentle counter pressure (splint) your incision when vomiting to prevent the wound from opening.

Call your doctor or seek immediate medical care if:

- You are too sick to your stomach to drink fluids.
- You cannot keep fluids down.
- Your nausea or vomiting is getting worse.
- You have symptoms of dehydration like a fever, little or dark urine, dry eyes and mouth or extreme fatigue.
- Your pain medication is not working or making you feel sick.
- You feel dizzy or light-headed.

Call 911 if:

- You feel like you might faint or you passed out.
- You are too sick to seek medical help independently.