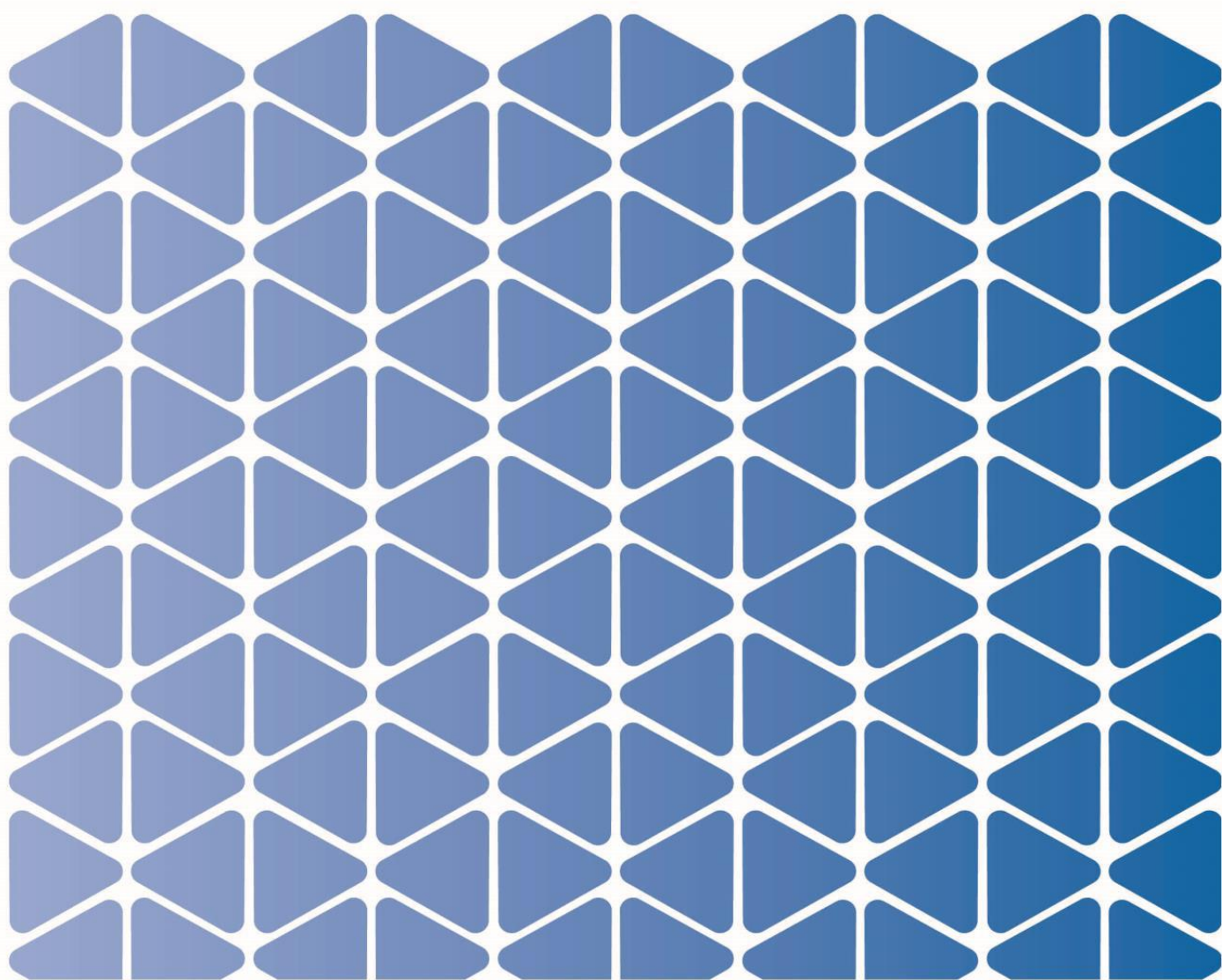


PATIENT INFORMATION

COPING WITH NAUSEA AND SICKNESS



Nausea and sickness often occur as a result of medication and/or infection and are usually temporary symptoms. Vomiting can be triggered by smells, tastes, anxiety, pain, motion, certain images or even thoughts. If you continue to be sick and do not improve consult your doctor as soon as possible.

Prevention of Nausea

- A walk in the fresh air may increase your appetite.
- Eat in a well ventilated room and relaxed surroundings if possible.
- Eat slowly and chew your food well.
- Avoid drinking fluids with your meal, have sips only, and do not have a drink for at least half an hour after finishing your meal.
- Eat frequent small meals or snacks. You may feel worse if you let your stomach get empty or overloaded. Six smaller meals or snacks each day may be easier to manage. Suitable snacks include a sandwich, toast, cheese and biscuits, scone, yoghurt, cereal bar, crisps.
- Avoid cooking smells if possible. Let someone else do the cooking if you can.
- Keep your mouth and teeth clean to avoid lingering tastes that may trigger nausea.

Do not worry if you fancy something unusual or at a strange time of the day, Keep snacks handy so you can eat little and often. Have as much variety as you can tolerate but nothing too rich. You may find it preferable not to eat too near to bedtime.

Try

- Using a smaller plate and presenting your food attractively so it tempts you to eat.
- Dry meals - foods without much sauce or gravy may be better tolerated.
- Cold foods and drinks have less smell and may be more acceptable. They are often quick and easy to prepare and can often be just as nutritious
- Food from the freezer that only needs heating up to reduce cooking smells.
- Sipping cool fizzy drinks slowly through a straw. Letting them settle first may help.
- Salty foods, such as crisps, crackers, peanuts and tart food or flavours such as grapefruit may help reduce nausea.
- Nibbling a dry biscuit, cracker or dry toast before getting out of bed in the morning may be helpful. Get up slowly.
- Ginger and ginger flavoured drinks and foods may help. Try ginger ale, ginger beer, ginger biscuits.

- Peppermint flavours such as mint sweets, chewing gum and peppermint tea may help.
- You may find fruit sorbets, ice cream, and jelly can be refreshing and go down easily.

Some tablets may need to be taken with or after food and some are best taken on empty Stomach (always check the medicine label or information leaflet that you get with your medication or talk to your GP or pharmacist).

Avoid

- Sweet, spicy or fatty foods **if they make you feel worse.**
- Tight fitting clothes around the waist.
- Lying down within two hours after eating.
- Sit comfortably in quiet surroundings.

If you are being sick

It is important to try and keep your calorie and fluid intake up as much as possible. Choose drinks that contain calories rather than plain water. You could try:-

Fizzy drinks such as lemonade, Lucozade, Vimto, Lilt, Cola, bitter lemon, tonic water, ginger ale. Avoid diet or low calorie drinks.

Still drinks such as squashes and cordials, barley water, blackcurrant with added Vitamin C.

Fruit juices such as apple, orange, grapefruit, pineapple, tomato, grape. These can be bought in cartons.

Try any mixtures of these drinks such as orange juice and lemonade, Ribena and soda water.

Note: Some medications can interact with fruit and fruit juices such as cranberry with warfarin and grapefruit with statins (cholesterol lowering tablets). Please consult your Doctor or Pharmacist if you are unsure about your medication.

Will I Be Getting Enough Nourishment?

It can be difficult to meet your energy needs when you are feeling ill, and the following ideas may help.

Glucose is a sugar that is less sweet than normal sugar so more can be used. It can be bought from a chemist and added to any drinks to give the desired sweetness.

You could try fortified drinks or supplement drinks such as **Complan** or **Build Up** which are available from the most supermarkets and chemists without a prescription. They may be useful if you are finding solid food too filling or difficult to keep down. They are in the form of a powder which needs to be made up with milk. They are available in a variety of sweet and savoury flavours and can be served hot or cold:

Build-up

Vanilla, strawberry, chocolate, banana, vegetable, tomato, potato and leek, chicken.

Complan

Original, strawberry, vanilla, chocolate, banana, peach and raspberry, chicken and vegetable.

Nurishment™ and **Nutrament™** are also available over the counter but are ready to drink. They can be served chilled or incorporated into meals e.g. can be poured over ice cream or add the neutral flavour to soups.

Milk is a good source of nutrition and should be taken daily if you can manage it.

Full fat milk (blue top) is ideal but if you are used to semi skimmed (green top) or skimmed (red top) start with them as you may find full cream too rich.

Milk is versatile, you can have it plain or mixed with any of the following:-

- Fruit for example bananas, strawberries, tinned peaches - sieve, blend or liquidise.
- Cocoa, Ovaltine, Horlicks, Bournvita, Drinking Chocolate, coffee.
- If you are allowed to drink alcohol you could try a teaspoon of sherry or brandy with sugar, honey or glucose to taste.
- Full fat yoghurt or drinking yoghurt, any flavour
- 2 melted jelly cubes.

- Vanilla essence and sugar, honey or syrup, cinnamon or nutmeg to add flavour.
- Ice cream, any flavour.
- Instant soup, teaspoon of marmite, Vegemite or Bovril.
- Milk shake powders and syrups.

Ready made milkshakes

These are available from supermarkets or grocery shops:

Mars™, Mars Extra™, Galaxy™, Yazoo™, Aero™, Bounty™ are some varieties on offer.

Many supermarkets also produce their own brand products, which may be less expensive.

Fortified Milk

You could try this at home to make milk richer in protein and energy.

Whisk 4 heaped tablespoons of dried milk powder (e.g. Marvel, Five Pints or supermarket own brand) into a pint (560ml) of your usual milk (preferably full fat milk).

Keep it in the fridge in place of ordinary milk to use in drinks and cooking.

Returning to Solid Food

- Returning to solid food is important and should be done as soon as possible but start with small snacks of your favourite foods as often as you can manage and gradually build up to normal sized meals.
- Savoury foods may be better to start with: plain toast, bread, pitta bread, chapatti, naan, crackers or crisp breads with marmite, cheese spread, paste or a well-cooked boiled egg.
- You may prefer to start with soup but remember that tinned and packet soups contain little nourishment on their own. Add cooked pasta or vegetables, beans, lentils, grated cheese or 1 tablespoon of skimmed milk powder to the soup. Try to have some bread or a sandwich with it.
- Try a sandwich with any filling you fancy. This can be toasted for a change.
- A light meal e.g. white fish, chicken or plain meat with potato, chapatti, rice or pasta. Avoid spices, rich sauces or gravies if your nausea symptoms are worsen.
- Boil in the bag foods are useful as they do not smell much while cooking.

- For a sweeter taste try plain biscuits e.g. Rich Tea, Morning Coffee, Arrowroot or plain cake like madeira, sponge, scones or tea bread.
- Milk puddings, ice cream, yoghurt, egg custard, instant deserts or tinned fruit are easy puddings to start with.

If you are concerned that you are unable to eat properly or that your weight is dropping, consult your doctor.

There are some products available on prescription which may improve your nutritional intake or medication which may help to improve nausea and sickness.

If your Doctor or Dietitian has recommended supplements on prescription, it is important for you to take these as directed.

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Covering the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch, Worcestershire Royal Hospital and Kidderminster Hospital

Tel: 01905 760 136

Email: wah-tr.dietetics@nhs.net

Produced by:
Nutrition and Dietetic Department
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
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If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.