VOMITING/NAUSEA

Vomiting is throwing up the contents of the stomach. Dry heaves may precede or follow vomiting. Nausea is when you feel like you are going to throw up.

COMMON CAUSES:
- Viruses in the intestines
- Some medications, such as antibiotics and oral contraceptives
- Spoiled food/food poisoning
- Eating or drinking too much, especially alcohol
- Motion sickness
- Morning sickness in pregnant females

OTHER MEDICAL CONDITIONS:
Labrynthitis: An inflammation of an area in the ear that usually results from an upper respiratory infection.

A concussion from a head injury: Can indicate serious injury.

Stomach ulcers

Hepatitis: Inflammation of the liver.

Meningitis: Inflammation of membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.

SELF-CARE:
- Don’t eat solid foods. Don’t drink milk.
- Stay hydrated. Drink clear liquids (water, sports drinks, ginger ale, etc.). Take small sips and drink only 1 to 2 ounces at a time. Eat ice chips if nothing else will stay down.
- Gradually return to a regular diet, but wait 8 hours from the last time you vomited. Start with bland foods like toast, crackers, and rice that are easy to digest. Avoid spicy foods.
- Don’t smoke, drink alcohol, or take aspirin.

For motion sickness, try an over-the-counter anti-nausea medication such as Dramamine, available in the ECU Student Health Service pharmacy.

Vomiting/Nausea: What Kind of Care Do I Need?

Besides vomiting, do you have:
- High fever
- Stiff neck
- Lethargy (Weakness)
- Severe headache
- Purple or bumpy red skin rash
- Sensitivity to light

Do dry heaves and/or vomiting occur after a recent head injury or do you vomit true, red blood?

With vomiting, are any signs of drug or alcohol poisoning present:
- Confusion; lethargy (weakness); slurred speech
- Impaired motor functioning
- Shallow breathing
- Clammy skin
- Weak, but rapid pulse
- Agitation, combativeness
- Seizure
- Unconsciousness

After repeated vomiting, do you have signs of dehydration:
- Sunken, dry, or tearless eyes
- Dry mouth, tongue, and lips
- No or low amount of urine passed; dark yellow
- Lightheadedness
- Dry skin
- Dizziness, confusion, weakness
- Increase in breathing and heart rate
- Severe thirst (may come and go)

With vomiting, do you have signs of an acute kidney infection:
- Fever and shaking chills
- Pain in one or both sides of your back

After a recent case of the flu or chicken pox with sudden repeated vomiting, do you have:
- Pain in the upper right area of the abdomen
- Rapid mental status changes (agitation, confusion, irritability, delirium)
- Increased pulse and breathing rate
- Lethargy (Weakness)
- Loss of consciousness
Vomiting/Nausea: What Kind of Care Do I Need? (Continued)

With nausea or vomiting, do the whites of your eyes or does your skin look yellow?  

Do you have stomach pain that lasts for more than 2 hours, interferes with your activities, and keeps hurting after you vomit?  

Do you induce vomiting after overeating or to lose weight?  

Are you vomiting medicine that is necessary for you to take?  

WHENEVER THERE IS UNCERTAINTY ABOUT SYMPTOMS, SEE A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.  
Make an appointment by calling 328-6841.