

a series of fact sheets written
by experts in the field of liver
disease

HCV Treatment Side Effect Management: Nausea & Vomiting

Alan Franciscus, Editor-in-Chief

Nausea can be caused by the hepatitis C virus as well as by HCV therapy. Vomiting is not usually associated with having chronic hepatitis C, but it can be a side effect of HCV treatment. Nausea and vomiting can be caused by many other factors, such as stress, headaches, viruses, odors, alcohol, lack of food and drink or an overindulgence in food and drink. Regardless of the cause, nausea can have quite an impact on a person's well being and quality of life. It can also affect how you take your medications and even whether or not you will stay on treatment.

Vomiting is the body's way of removing substances that can be harmful or toxic. It is a very potent reaction. It is such a powerful bodily function that it can be induced by a memory of a previous vomiting episode or of what brought on the episode.

Symptoms

Nausea is usually described as feeling sick to your stomach, and can range from general queasiness to a strong urge to vomit. Other symptoms of nausea include:

- Unpleasant sensation at the back of the throat
- Cold sweat
- Pallor (lack of color)
- Increased saliva
- Reflux or regurgitation of stomach fluids and contents
- Retching (vomit like contractoions but no contents expelled)

It is important for a person to find out what is causing the nausea and or vomiting so that certain steps can be taken to control it. Try to figure out what triggers the nausea and vomiting. It may be as simple as altering eating and drinking habits.

Try these simple tips for controlling general nausea; they may also help with vomiting:

- If morning nausea is a problem, eat some dry crackers when first waking up and get out of bed slowly
- Avoid trigger foods and odors
- Avoid spicy, greasy, and deep-fried foods
- Eat small amounts of food every few hours rather than 2-3 large meals a day
- During periods of nausea, avoid acidic juices (orange, grapefruit, and pineapple); instead try clear juices, ginger ale, chicken broth, herbal tea, or sports drinks
- Eat and drink slowly
- Eat foods at room temperature (neither very hot nor very cold)
- Take over-the-counter medication for nausea as recommended by a health care professional

- Try some peppermint, chamomile or ginger tea to help calm the stomach
- Try ginger root cooked or raw
- Try sucking on ginger candy
- Try drinking small amounts of clear fluids (at room temperature)
- Try relaxation techniques
- Try light exercise
- Try acupuncture or acupressure
- Try acupressure wristbands

If nausea and/or vomiting doesn't lessen or becomes worse contact your health care provider. There are prescription medicines to help treat nausea and vomiting. Feeling sick to your stomach and vomiting can greatly affect quality of life. It is important to be as proactive as possible so that you can stay focused on staying on HCV therapy. It is amazing how some of the simplest tips (listed above) can make a huge difference in how you feel.



Be Sure to Check Out the Other Factsheets in This Series: “HCV Treatment – Side Effect Management”

- A Guide to Hepatitis C: Treatment Side Effect Management
- Managing Side Effects of HCV Treatment
- Side Effect Management: Anxiety, Mania, and Depression
- Side Effect Management: Dental Hygiene
- Side Effect Management: Depression
- Side Effect Management: Depression—For Family and Friends
- Side Effect Management: Diarrhea
- Side Effect Management: Hair Loss
- Side Effect Management: Headaches
- Side Effect Management: Hemolytic Anemia
- Side Effect Management: Injection Site Reactions
- Side Effect Management: Maintaining a Positive Attitude
- Side Effect Management: Mouth Sores
- Side Effect Management: Nausea
- Side Effect Management: Neutropenia
- Side Effect Management: Rashes
- Side Effect Management: Taste Changes
- Side Effect Management: Water
- Side Effect Management: Weight Loss

For more information about hepatitis C, hepatitis B and HCV coinfections, please visit www.hcvadvocate.org.

• *hcsPFACTsheet* •
 A publication of the Hepatitis C Support Project

<p>Executive Director Editor-in-Chief, HCSP Publications Alan Franciscus</p> <p>Design Paula Fener</p> <p>Production C.D. Mazoff, PhD</p> <p>Contact information: Hepatitis C Support Project PO Box 427037 San Francisco, CA 94142-7037 alanfranciscus@hcvadvocate.org</p>	<p>The information in this fact sheet is designed to help you understand and manage HCV and is not intended as medical advice. All persons with HCV should consult a medical practitioner for diagnosis and treatment of HCV.</p> <p>This information is provided by the Hepatitis C Support Project • a nonprofit organization for HCV education, support and advocacy • © 2007 Hepatitis C Support Project • Reprint permission is granted and encouraged with credit to the Hepatitis C Support Project.</p>
--	---



HCV ADVOCATE
www.hcvadvocate.org