

**Nausea is a common and distressing side effect of chemotherapy**, affecting up to 80% of patients depending on the drugs used and individual risk factors<sup>3</sup>. Effective management is important to maintain nutrition, hydration, and quality of life.

**Key strategies for managing chemotherapy-induced nausea:**

- **Preventive (prophylactic) anti-nausea medications:**
  - These are most effective when taken *before* chemotherapy begins, rather than waiting until nausea starts<sup>38</sup>.
  - Commonly used medications include 5-HT<sub>3</sub> receptor antagonists (such as ondansetron or palonosetron), dexamethasone, and sometimes NK1 receptor antagonists or olanzapine<sup>27</sup>.
  - For breakthrough or rescue, drugs like prochlorperazine, promethazine, or lorazepam may be used as needed<sup>2</sup>.
- **Diet and lifestyle adjustments:**
  - Eat small, frequent meals throughout the day instead of large meals<sup>4</sup>.
  - Stay hydrated with sips of fluids, ice chips, or clear liquids<sup>5</sup>.
  - Try tart foods (like lemons or pickles) or ginger root, which some patients find helpful<sup>14</sup>.
  - Avoid strong odors and foods that worsen your nausea<sup>46</sup>.
- **Non-drug approaches:**
  - Aromatherapy with peppermint oil, relaxation techniques, and behavioral therapy can provide additional relief for some people<sup>62</sup>.

**When to contact your care team:**

- If your nausea is not controlled with prescribed medications
- If you are unable to keep fluids down, have signs of dehydration, or are losing weight
- If you have additional symptoms such as severe vomiting, abdominal pain, or confusion

**Summary:**

**Take anti-nausea medications as prescribed, ideally before chemotherapy starts, and use dietary and lifestyle strategies to minimize symptoms.** If your nausea persists or worsens, notify your oncology team for further management and possible adjustment of your treatment plan<sup>38</sup>.

1. <https://PMC3188425/>
2. <https://PMC4046471/>
3. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/side-effects/nausea/nausea-hp-pdq>
4. <https://www.mdanderson.org/cancerwise/how-to-manage-nausea-caused-by-cancer-treatment.h00-159459267.html>
5. [https://www.rch.org.au/rchcpq/hospital\\_clinical\\_guideline\\_index/chemotherapy induced nausea and vomiting/](https://www.rch.org.au/rchcpq/hospital_clinical_guideline_index/chemotherapy_induced_nausea_and_vomiting/)
6. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/side-effects/eating-problems/nausea-and-vomiting/managing.html>
7. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2468294220301131>
8. <https://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/side-effects/nausea-vomiting>