

VOMITING

Vomiting occurs when the contents of the stomach come out of the mouth in a forceful manner. Nausea is a queasy sensation felt in the stomach and is usually present prior to vomiting. An upset stomach is the most common cause of vomiting. Often the cause is just something that "does not agree with you" but may include: bad food or food poisoning; alcohol; food allergies; certain medications including chemotherapy; infection; migraine headaches; morning sickness during pregnancy; motion sickness; digestive diseases; in infants, a milk intolerance or immature digestive system; or forced vomiting as in bulimia.

What you can do:

To avoid dehydration:

Take in as much fluid as possible without further upsetting the digestive system.

Wait an hour or so after vomiting before taking anything. Then take small amounts of water, ginger ale, simple fruit juices, or gatorade.

If able to keep the fluid down without vomiting, increase the amount slowly (every hour or two) and begin to work back to a full diet.

A good diet in between liquid and regular is the **BRAT** diet. This diet is easy on the system and helps restore lost nutrients. It consists of **B**=bananas, **R**=rice, **A**=applesauce, **T**=toast (dry)

What you can expect:

Complications may include *dehydration* (not enough fluids in one's system) due to excessive vomiting which can lead to other problems.

In infants and the elderly, this could be a very serious problem.

Prolonged vomiting can also cause abdominal pain.

Contact your doctor if you vomit blood, have severe abdominal pain, are unable to retain any fluids for 12 hours or more, have nausea for a long period of time, or have signs of *dehydration* (increased thirst, low urine output, sunken eyes, skin that is not elastic but sludge-like, no tears when crying, and lethargy).