

What is nausea?

Many illnesses can cause nausea, which is characterized by stomach pain, loss of appetite, and an urge to vomit. People with nausea generally are unable to eat or hold down food or fluids.

What causes nausea and vomiting?

Many different things can cause nausea. Germs, such as viruses and bacteria, commonly cause nausea and vomiting. Sometimes a person can have nausea without having an infection, such as when nausea is caused by certain medications, food allergies or additives, a chemical poisoning, or certain chronic diseases.

Can nausea and vomiting be passed from one person to another?

When nausea is caused by a germ, the illness can be spread to other people if the germ gets into the body through the mouth. Germs causing nausea and vomiting can be spread through contaminated food or water. Close contact with a person who has nausea may also spread infection. This occurs when a person accidentally puts something that is contaminated with stool or vomit in or around his or her mouth. Wash hands properly and disinfect surfaces whenever changing diapers or helping a child use the toilet, as this is a common route of spreading the infection.

Who is at risk for nausea and vomiting?

Anyone can get nausea and vomiting.

How are nausea and vomiting treated?

Diagnosing the cause of nausea and vomiting can be difficult. If symptoms are caused by bacteria, sometimes an antibiotic can be used to treat it. Other causes of nausea and vomiting, such as viruses, have no specific treatments and only general comfort measures are recommended. For severe nausea and vomiting, contact your health care provider, who may recommend a specific anti-nausea medication. To help prevent dehydration, make sure to drink plenty of fluids. Follow other comfort measures including getting plenty of rest, eating bland foods, and avoiding food odors.

How can the spread of nausea and vomiting be reduced?

- Make sure that both children and adults follow good handwashing practices. Wash hands especially well after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and helping children use the toilet. Supervise children when they wash their hands after toileting or diapering.
- Wash hands particularly well before preparing or serving food.
- Use a **sanitizing** solution to help minimize germs on surfaces such as tabletops, counters, doorknobs, and toys.
- Use a **disinfectant** solution on diaper changing pads, bathroom surfaces, and toilets.
- If there are multiple cases of nausea/vomiting in a child care, report it to your local health department for assistance with outbreak control measures.

Exclude from group setting?

Any person (child or adult) who has vomited 2 or more times within a 24 hour period needs to be excluded from the child care or preschool setting. The only exception for this is if the vomiting is caused by a chronic health condition, as documented in a formal care plan.

Reference: *American Academy of Pediatrics*

- *Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools*, 4th ed.

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Child Care Health Outreach Program

3020 Rucker Avenue, Suite 104 ■ Everett, WA 98201-3900 ■ www.snohd.org ■ tel: 425.252.5415