

Managing Nausea

There are multiple causes of nausea, including chemotherapy and radiation. If you are suffering from nausea, it is very important to continue eating and drinking to maintain your weight and avoid dehydration. There are many ways to manage nausea. Your physician will provide you with the appropriate prescription(s). Please pick up the medication(s) checked below.

Compazine (prochlorperazine)

- Recommended dose: 5-10 mg by mouth 1 hour before radiation therapy, then take 5-10 mg every 6 hours as needed
- Possible side effects include: constipation, dizziness, drowsiness, blurred vision, dry mouth, tremors, and nasal congestion
- Warning: Use with caution when driving or operating machinery. Do not use alcohol.

Ativan (lorazepam)

- Recommended dose: 0.5-1.0 mg by mouth 30 minutes before radiation therapy, then take 0.5 -1.0 mg every 6 hours as needed
- Warning: May increase the side effects of Compazine, including dizziness, drowsiness, and blurred vision. Do not drive, operate machinery, or use alcohol.

Anzemet (dolasetron)

- Recommended dose: Take 50-100 mg by mouth 1 hr prior to radiation once a day
- Side effects include: headache, fatigue, drowsiness, dizziness, irregular heartbeats, muscle cramps or uncontrollable movements
- Notify your physician if you have a low level of potassium or magnesium, take a diuretic (water pill) or Tagamet, or have a history of irregular heartbeats.

Zofran (ondansetron)

- Recommended dose: Take one tablet (8 mg) by mouth up to 3 times a day as needed
- Before taking ondansetron, tell your doctor if you have liver disease.
- Possible side effects include: Headache, fatigue, drowsiness, dizziness, anxiety, agitation, constipation, irregular heartbeats, muscle cramps, or uncontrollable movements.
- Please stop taking Zofran if you experience irregular heartbeats, muscle cramps, or uncontrollable movements.

Decadron (dexamethasone)

- Recommended dose: Start at 1-4 mg by mouth every 12 hours with food or milk
- Warning: Do not stop taking Decadron suddenly if you have been taking it for more than one week. You will need to gradually reduce the dose.
- Possible side effects include: Fatigue, dizziness, problems with diabetes control, increased hunger or thirst, acne, glaucoma, insomnia, changes in behavior, increased blood pressure, weight gain, or upset stomach.