

You may experience nausea (feeling queasy or sick to your stomach) and/or vomiting (throwing up) from your chemotherapy treatment. Nausea and vomiting often occur a few days after chemotherapy and can last for 3 or more days. Nausea is more common than vomiting; however, both symptoms can range from mild to severe (unable to eat, drink or perform other daily activities). Severe and/or prolonged nausea and vomiting (lasting more than 1 day) can lead to dehydration, weight loss, electrolyte imbalances, and anxiety and/or depression.

Nausea is best controlled when it is managed early. Depending on your chemotherapy regimen, your doctor will prescribe you one or more of the following medicines to help you stay in control of your nausea:

Ondansetron (Zofran®)

- This medication was developed specifically for chemotherapy-induced nausea
- You may take one 8 mg tablet every 6 hours as needed for nausea
 - ODT (Oral disintegrating tablet) or tablet
- If your nausea does not go away 30 minutes after taking this medicine you can take another oral anti-nausea medication (Compazine®, Phenergan®, or Ativan®)
- Common side effects include: headache, constipation or diarrhea
- Ask your nurse if you received Aloxi®, which is a long lasting intravenous (IV) anti-nausea medication in the same drug family as Zofran®. If you received Aloxi®, do NOT start to take Zofran® until 24-36 hours after your treatment.

Prochlorperazine (Compazine®)

- This medication can be very effective for mild nausea or in combination with Zofran®.
- You may take one 10 mg tablet every 6 hours as needed for nausea
- You may alternate this medication with Zofran®, so that you are taking an anti-nausea medicine every 3-4 hours. For example: 8 am—Zofran® 8 mg tablet, Noon—Compazine® 10 mg tablet, 4 pm—Zofran® 8 mg tablet, 8 pm—Compazine® 10 mg tablet
- Common side effects include: drowsiness, dizziness, constipation, or dry mouth

Promethazine (Phenergan®)

- This medication can be very effective for mild nausea and help with motion sickness
- You may take one 25 mg tablet every 6 hours as needed for nausea
- You may alternate this medication with Zofran®, so that you are taking an anti-nausea medicine every 3-4 hours. For example: 8 am—Zofran® 8 mg tablet, Noon—Phenergan® 25 mg tablet, 4 pm—Zofran® 8 mg tablet, 8 pm—Phenergan® 25 mg tablet
- Common side effects include: drowsiness, dizziness, dry mouth, feeling nervous or excitable

Lorazepam (Ativan®)

- This medication works for nausea, anxiety and insomnia. It is the drug of choice for anticipatory nausea (nausea or vomiting that is a learned response and triggered by sights, sounds or smells).
- You may take 0.5-1 mg tablet every 8 hours as needed for nausea
- You may alternate this medication with Zofran®, Compazine® or Phenergan®
- Common side effects include: drowsiness, dizziness, or headache
- Ativan® can make you very drowsy; therefore it is best taken before bed or a nap

Self-Management Tips:

Here are some things you can do to decrease nausea or vomiting:

- Stay hydrated (8-10 glasses per day)
- If you are vomiting (throwing up), be sure to replace lost electrolytes with clear fluids such as Gatorade®, Powerade®, Pedialyte®, broth, Jello®, etc.
- Eat a small amount of food before your chemotherapy treatment
- Eat smaller, more frequent meals (about every 3 hours) throughout the day
 - Soft, bland, low-fiber foods. Examples: banana, rice, noodles, white bread, chicken, turkey or mild white fish
- Avoid fatty, fried, spicy or salty foods when you have nausea
- Reduce food odor when possible—have someone else prepare your food
- Eat foods that are room temperature or cool—the smells from hot foods can make nausea worse.
- Keep your mouth clean, brush your teeth twice a day, and rinse your mouth out with water after meals.
- Meditation, relaxation exercises or music may help you feel less anxious—reducing anxiety can help decrease or limit nausea.

Call Us — 406-752-8900

- If you are **unable to control your nausea or vomiting** with these suggestions, please call Logan Health Hematology and Oncology. We are available to provide IV hydration, electrolyte replacement and IV anti-nausea medications.
- *Dehydration and/or electrolyte imbalance can cause serious problems to your body and should be managed as early as possible.*
- If it has been **more than 24 hours** since you have been able to keep anything down, please call immediately.
- **We care about you** and have multiple tools at our disposal to help you. Please do not hesitate to call and know that we want to help make this the best experience possible.