

End of Life Care Information

NAUSEA & VOMITING

INTRODUCTION

People at end of life can experience nausea and vomiting and this can have an adverse effect on the person's physical, psychological and social well being and significantly impair their quality of life.

DEFINITION

Definition of nausea:

A feeling of sickness in the stomach characterized by an urge but not always leading to vomit.

Definition of vomiting:

The forcible voluntary or involuntary emptying of the stomach contents through the mouth.

ASSESSMENT

- Knowledge of the physiology of nausea and vomiting will promote a rational choice of treatment
- History of symptom and previous management, pharmacological and other
- Assess the cause and treat reversible causes if possible and appropriate such as constipation
- Review regularly, minimum of four hourly





Supporting excellence in the delivery of end of life care

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MANAGEMENT

- Eliminate sights and smells that cause nausea & vomiting e.g. foods, deodorants, air fresheners, body odor and bowel motions
- Well ventilated room, fresh air with fan or open window
- Loose fitting cool clothing
- Optimise oral hygiene, may use 1/2 tsp baking soda, 1/2 tsp salt in 250mls water as a mouthwash, alternatively there are many other mouth wash preparations available
- Offer sour candy ice chips made from lemon / pineapple based juice, ginger ale or fruit as per individual preference if person is still able to tolerate
- Some people may prefer peppermints or peppermint tea
- If the person is still eating, offer small amounts of bland foods, fluids and snacks at room temperature
- When eating or drinking the upper body should be elevated where possible
- Liaise with doctor / medical cover if person already has NG tube insitu and on free drainage

Other therapies that may already be in place (taught or audio) if nausea has been a problem:

- Guided imagery/visualization: teaches the person to mentally remove themselves from the present and imagine that they are in another place. This can mentally block the feeling of nausea.
- Music therapy: Using music therapy can relieve stress and anxiety and give a sense of well-being
- Distraction: Many different forms of distraction can be used e.g. discussing family memories, routines, DVDs, photos
- Acupressure points: A form of traditional Chinese techniques using pressure. This can be done by the person or a family member/friend. Acupressure bands are also available.

CONTACT US

A registered nurse is available 24hours a day, 7 days a week to offer support and advice over the phone to either patients, families or other health professionals.

Please phone if you have any concerns **0800 666 676**