



9. Recommendations

Practice: The instrument to measure nausea, vomiting, and retching must be chosen carefully to ensure accurate and comprehensive assessment. Important criteria are to

- Use self-report instruments rather than observational assessment when ever feasible.
- Use tools with known psychometric properties (i.e., reliability and validity).
- Look for clarity, precision, cultural sensitivity, and understandable wording in the self-report tool.
- Choose an instrument with an easy-to-read format.
- Ascertain and describe the specific symptoms and the components to be measured.
- Determine a time frame for recall of the symptom experienced.
- Consider the purpose for which the instrument is intended, such as characterizing a patient population (e.g., demographics, type of cancer, type of treatment) or type of symptom (e.g., chemotherapy-related [acute or delayed], anticipatory, chronic).
- Consider the ease of scoring and type of score (e.g., total instrument, subscale scores for each individual symptom or component).

Careful assessment of concomitant symptoms with reliable and valid instruments is essential.

Nurses and other clinicians should continue to explore where and how to incorporate psycho-educational interventions in their practice.

Systematic desensitization and muscle relaxation with guided imagery or meditation has a beneficial effect on nausea.

Education

- Psycho-educational treatments may be effective in managing nausea, vomiting, and retching.
- Systematic desensitization and muscle relaxation with guided imagery or meditation has had beneficial effects on nausea.
- Randomized trials show cannabinoids may be slightly better than conventional antiemetics for treating chemotherapy induced emesis
- Patients prefer cannabinoids, but they are also toxic.
- Global assessments without information about the individual symptoms have hindered progress in understanding nausea, vomiting, and retching and the development of effective interventions.
- Educational materials with an appropriately tested reading level for patient home use are recommended for better learning.
- Pharmacologic and nonpharmacologic interventions do not exert equivalent effects on concomitant symptoms



Research

- Large multisite studies of well-designed randomized studies are needed.
- Randomized intervention studies of complementary and alternative medicine modalities as a treatment for nausea, vomiting and retching in different populations (ethnicity, age, stage of illness) are needed.
- Patterns of nausea, vomiting, and retching with varied emetogenic chemotherapy protocols and specific treatment strategies are needed.
- Patterns of the occurrence and distress of the individual symptoms of nausea, vomiting, and retching in chemotherapy-naïve patients and those previously treated should be determined.
- Studies should look at the effectiveness of psychoeducational care for nausea, vomiting, and retching across multiple cycles of chemotherapy in patients who are chemotherapy-naïve and those with a previous course(s).
- Complete reporting of population descriptions should include those who decline study participation.
- studies should look at the relationship of concomitant symptoms to the individual symptoms of nausea, vomiting, and retching.
- The effectiveness of nursing interventions with varied chemotherapy regimes in diverse patient populations (e.g., adult, pediatric, chemotherapy naïve, secondary chemotherapy, hospice, palliative care) needs to be determined.
- Accurate measurement of the concomitant nausea, vomiting, and retching is crucial to determine symptom patterns and make comparisons. (Pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic interventions do not exert equivalent effects on these unique symptoms).
- Continued testing and reporting of reliability and validity of instruments used to measure nausea, vomiting, and retching for patients with cancer should be performed.
- To build the science of oncology nursing, research endeavors need to be described more fully in reports.
- Studies should be conceptualized based on nursing theory.

Further randomized control trials are needed to confirm the effectiveness of newer antiemetic regimens for delayed nausea and vomiting.