

Anti-dizziness and Anti-vomiting Drugs

Dizziness and vomiting are not illnesses but symptoms of some diseases or conditions. There are various causes for dizziness and vomiting. Such causes include gastroenteritis, food poisoning, travel fatigue, drug reaction, severe pain, over-agitation, endocrine disorder and concussion.

There are three commonly used types of anti-dizziness and anti-vomiting drugs:

(1) Anti-cholinergics

They suppress the vomiting centre in the brain and are very effective in preventing travel sickness. Hyoscine hydrobromide is an example.

(2) Anti-histamines

They suppress the vomiting centre in the brain and reduce the over-activation of the vomiting reflex. They work very well for travel sickness as well as symptoms of dizziness and vomiting due to other causes.

Commonly examples are cyclizine and dimenhydrinate.

(3) Phenothiazines

They can prevent the vomiting reflex caused by stimulation of the chemoreceptor trigger zone in the brain. They are the most commonly used and most effective drugs for dizziness and vomiting. This type of drugs can prevent nausea and vomiting caused by radiotherapy and chemotherapy, but do not work for travel sickness.

Advice on Medication

- (1) Anti-dizziness and anti-vomiting drugs can provide only temporary relief to symptoms like dizziness and vomiting. The ultimate solution is to find out the underlying cause and get proper treatment.
- (2) It may not be necessary to take anti-vomiting drugs for mild gastroenteritis, as this may suppress the symptoms and hinder your doctor from making the right diagnosis. If symptoms persist, seek medical consultation.
- (3) Anti-dizziness and anti-vomiting drugs have the side effect of drowsiness. Do not engage in dangerous activities and avoid driving or operating machinery after medication.
- (4) Most of these drugs have the effect of suppressing the central nervous system and should not be taken with alcohol as strengthening of such effect by alcohol could cause danger.
- (5) Pregnant women should consult their doctor before taking the drugs.

- (6) Frequent vomiting after a head injury is a warning sign. Seek immediate examination at the accident and emergency department.

Life Adaptations

- (1) Patients suffering from vomiting or dizziness should lie down and rest.
- (2) Avoid solid food within a few hours after vomiting. You should replenish fluid instead since vomiting causes water loss in your body,. To avoid triggering further vomiting, you should drink water or fruit juice for replenishment and then some easily digestible food, such as thin congee and oatmeal porridge.
- (3) If vomiting is an effect of the drugs that you are taking, do not stop medication but consult your doctor right away.
- (4) Vomiting during pregnancy may result in serious imbalance of electrolytes and malnutrition. Take small but frequent meals or eat small amount of snacks between meals to relieve the symptoms.

Storage of the Drugs

The drugs should be stored in a dry and cool place. Generally, they do not need to be refrigerated unless otherwise stated in the drug labels. Also, they should be stored properly to avoid accidents of mistaken consumption by children.