



## BASIC INFORMATION

### DESCRIPTION

An unpleasant, temporary disorder that often occurs while traveling. The semicircular canals in the inner ear are affected. These fluid-filled canals normally maintain a person's sense of balance.

### FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Loss of appetite, nausea, and vomiting.
- Spinning sensation.
- Weakness and being unsteady.
- Confusion; anxiety; sweating.
- Paleness.
- Yawning.

### CAUSES

Motion that may be from a plane, boat, car; amusement park ride, or swinging. The body, the inner ear, and the eyes send conflicting messages to the brain. The ears may sense motion that the eyes can not see, or the eyes may see movement that the body does not feel. People who suffer from motion sickness may have the symptoms just thinking about movement (such as when sitting on a plane waiting for take-off).

### RISK INCREASES WITH

- Travel.
- Ear disorders such as with allergies or infections.
- Smoky environment or poor ventilation.
- Drinking too much alcohol.
- Visual stimuli (moving horizon).

### PREVENTIVE MEASURES

- Avoid large meals and alcohol before and during trips.
- Sit in areas of the airplane (usually over the wings) or boat with the least motion.
- Recline in your seat, if possible.
- Breathe slowly and deeply. Don't read.
- Avoid areas where others are smoking, if possible.
- In a car, airplane, or bus, turn on the air vent to improve air movement.
- Take drugs to prevent motion sickness before a trip.
- There are behavior-modification techniques for those who are afraid to fly or have motion sickness. Contact the airline or your travel agent for information.
- Mental and emotional factors can add to motion sickness. Try to resolve concerns about travel before leaving home. Maintain a positive attitude.
- Consider preventive therapy. One technique involves special training for using your eyes that may help avoid the symptoms of motion sickness.

### EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Recovery once the trip is over or soon thereafter.

### POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

No serious complications are expected.



## DIAGNOSIS & TREATMENT

### GENERAL MEASURES

- Self-care is usually all that is needed. If your symptoms persist or cause concern, see your health care provider. A physical exam may be done and medical tests may be recommended to rule out other disorders.
- Once you have the symptoms, try to rest in a dark room with a cool cloth over the eyes and forehead.
- Allowing yourself to vomit can help the nausea. However, don't make yourself vomit.
- Acupressure may help. This is done by placing pressure on a point three finger-widths above the wrist on the inner arm. Elastic wristband products can be purchased to put pressure on this area.
- A battery-operated wristband product is available that will apply a mild, electrical pulse to the area. It can be used for prevention and treatment.
- Counseling may help if your work or lifestyle requires travel and you suffer from motion sickness.

### MEDICATIONS

- For minor discomfort, you may use nonprescription drugs, such as dimenhydrinate (Dramamine), or meclizine (Bonine) before and during travel. These can cause drowsiness.
- A scopolamine patch to control symptoms may be prescribed.
- Other drugs may be prescribed if simple treatment methods are not effective.

### ACTIVITY

Limited only by the symptoms.

### DIET

- Eat lightly or not at all before and during brief trips. For longer trips, sip frequently on beverages (tea and juices) to maintain your fluid intake. Avoid alcohol, carbonated drinks, and extra-cold beverages.
- Ginger helps some people. Take it on an empty stomach. It is available in a tea, capsules, or candied pieces.



### NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IF

You or a family member plans to travel and has had disabling motion sickness in the past.

Special notes:

---

---

---

More notes on the back of this page