Everyone has problems with digestion at one time or another. Common problems with digestion are: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or constipation. Read below to find helpful hints to help you with these problems.

**Nausea**

Nausea (NAW-see-uh) is an upset stomach that may stop you from wanting to eat. Some people also call this being “queasy”. It may or may not come before vomiting.

**DO:**
- Eat small meals 4-6 times each day instead of fewer larger meals.
- Eat slowly and relax before and after meals.
- Drink liquids one hour before or after meals (not during).

**DON’T:**
- Make yourself eat when your stomach is upset.
- Drink liquids during a meal.
- Smell odors from cooking food, especially frying foods.

**TRY:**
- Eating dry crackers, toast, or a popsicle.
- Drinking ginger ale, ginger tea, or peppermint tea to calm down an upset stomach that may be causing your nausea.

**Vomiting**

Vomiting (VOM-it-ing) is when the contents of your stomach come out through the mouth. It is also called “throwing up”. This causes you to lose fluids and foods, and can lead to dehydration (not having enough water in your body).

**IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU MIGHT VOMIT:**
- Lie down in a room with a lot of ventilation (air flow).
- Keep your head and shoulders above the rest of your body, such as propped up on a pillow.
- Loosen or take off tight clothing.
- Put a cool, damp cloth over your forehead, face, and neck.

**IF YOU DO VOMIT:**
- Drink clear liquids and juices such as tea, apple juice, cranberry juice, grape juice, or sports drinks.
- Eat gelatin, clear soup broth, or popsicles to help replace fluids.
### Diarrhea

**Diarrhea** (Die-er-EE-uh) is when your stools (bowel movements) are loose, watery, and frequent. Diarrhea can cause you to lose large amounts of water and important minerals. It can be due to an infection.

#### Have diarrhea?

**DO:**
- Drink clear liquids and juices such as tea, apple juice, cranberry juice, grape juice, or sports drinks.
- Eat bland foods like crackers, dry toast, or cereal.

**DON'T:**
- Drink caffeine or alcohol.
- Eat foods with a lot of spices.
- Eat sweets such as cookies, pies, cakes, donuts, candy, etc.
- Eat raw vegetables and fruit.
- Eat uncooked foods.
- Eat fried or greasy foods.
- Eat bran or whole grain cereal.
- Eat nuts, beans, peas, or relish.

**TRY:**
- Immodium AD (also known as loperamide), which you can find over-the-counter, without a prescription.
- Lomotil (also known as diphenoxylate), which is a prescription from your doctor.

### Constipation

**Constipation** (kon-sti-PAY-shun) is very slow or infrequent bowel movements (less than two movements per week). It can also be dry or hardened stools.

People on dialysis often complain of constipation. There are many causes:

- Medication for pain and phosphate binders.
- Low-fiber renal diet.
- Not drinking enough fluids.
- Lack of exercise.
- Nerve damage in your colon from diabetes.

#### Constipation and Renal Patients

**To Avoid and Treat Constipation**

**DIET:**
- Increase fiber. Instead of fruit juice, eat the fruit.
- Drink a cup of hot tea, coffee, or a cup of hot water with a squeeze of lemon early in the morning when you wake up.
- Follow the meal plan set up by your dietitian.

**ROUTINE:**
- Get regular sleep - go to bed and get up at the same time everyday.
- Get regular exercise to keep your bowels regular. Try walking, bicycling, swimming, or gardening.
- Don't ignore the need to use the bathroom for a bowel movement.

**Medication**
- Natural fibers: Benefiber, Metamucil, or Citrucel
- Stool Softeners: Dulcolax, Colace, or store brand stool softener.
- Laxatives: Miralax (Polyethylene glycol), Sorbitol, or Lactulose.