

Motion Sickness

What is motion sickness?

Motion sickness is when your child gets dizzy and nauseated while riding in the car, a boat, train, airplane, or on amusement park rides. Motion sickness is common, especially in young children. The problem is due to an inherited sensitivity of the equilibrium center located in the semicircular canals (inner ear). It is not related to emotional problems.

What is the treatment?

- **Treatment for the nausea**

Have your child lie down and keep a vomiting pan handy. Give him only sips of clear fluids until his stomach settles down. If your child goes to sleep, let him sleep. Usually, children don't vomit more than once, and all symptoms disappear in about 4 hours.

- **Prevention of motion sickness with antinausea medicine**

The best treatment for motion sickness is prevention. Buy some nonprescription Dramamine at your drugstore. Dramamine comes in 50-mg tablets and a 15-mg/teaspoon liquid. The dosage is 1 teaspoon of liquid Dramamine for children 2 to 6 years old, 1 tablet for children 6 to 12 years old, and 2 tablets for children over 12 years. Give the Dramamine 1 hour before traveling or going to an amusement park. The tablets give 6 hours of protection and are very helpful.

Also, consider buying an acupressure wristband. This may help your child during car, plane, or boat trips.

- **Prevention and types of travel**

- **Car trips:** It will help if your child looks out the window. Do not look down at books or games in car. After age 12, children can sit in the front seat.
- **Sea travel:** Avoid it when practical. Otherwise, stay on deck and look at the horizon.
- **Air travel:** Select a seat near the wings.
- **Amusement parks:** Avoid rides that spin.
- **Meals:** Eat light meals before or during trips.

Written by B.D. Schmitt, M.D., author of "Your Child's Health," Bantam Books.

This content is reviewed periodically and is subject to change as new health information becomes available. The information is intended to inform and educate and is not a replacement for medical evaluation, advice, diagnosis or treatment by a healthcare professional.