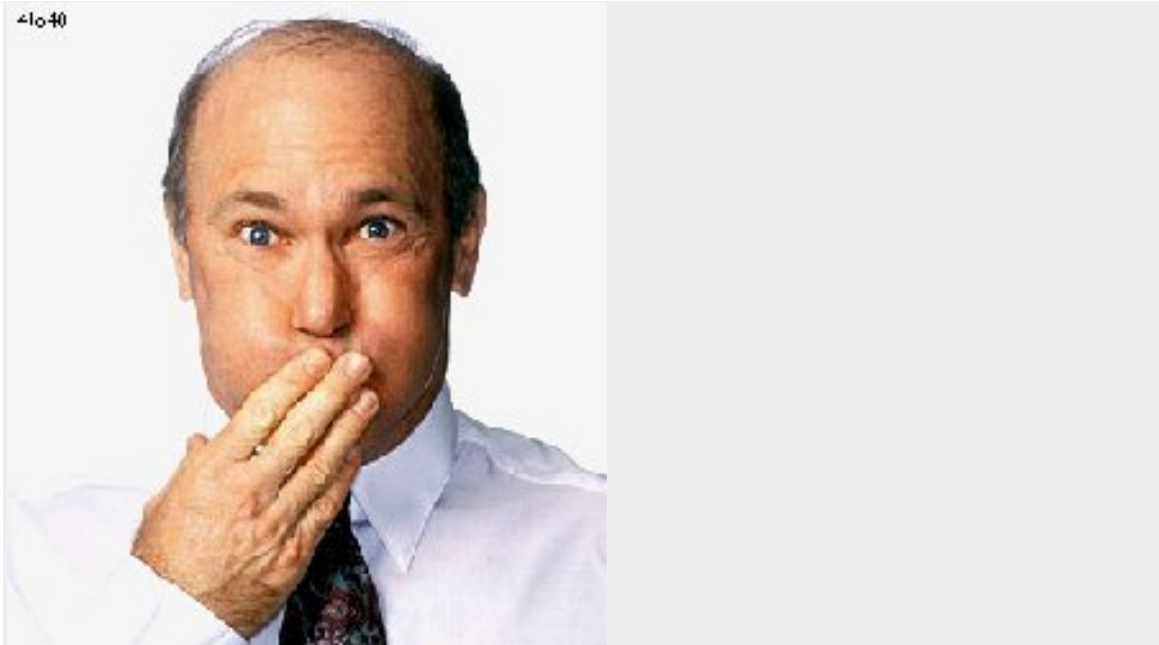


Severe Nausea - one troubling cause

by Dr. Delia Chiamonte, [Baltimore Health Examiner](#)



Nausea is awful. When severe, it makes even the simplest tasks difficult. Pregnant women count the days until it is over, and cancer patients dread it.

Some people, often children, suffer from disabling nausea caused by an illness called post-viral gastroparesis.

Post-viral gastroparesis starts innocently enough. A stuffy nose and cough. Perhaps diarrhea and a fever. Usually viruses such as these resolve on their own with no lasting effects. Usually. But every now and then the virus attacks the patient's stomach and disrupts its functioning, leading to post-viral gastroparesis.

Gastroparesis means partial paralysis of the stomach. When the stomach is sluggish, the food doesn't move through as it should and nausea results. Depending on the severity, the nausea may be constant or occur only after eating. It can be extremely difficult to cope with and may even send a patient to bed for months at a time.

There are tests that can measure the muscular activity of the stomach and how quickly it empties, which is how post-viral gastroparesis is ultimately diagnosed. Confirming the diagnosis is helpful, but not magical, since medical therapy for this disorder is far from perfect. There are some medications that can encourage the stomach to contract, but they don't bring a disordered stomach all the way back to normal. Often the stomach regains its functioning slowly, over time, and it can eventually return entirely to normal.

Acupuncture can be helpful and the support of others dealing with gastroparesis is crucial. Have any of you faced this? Any tips for fellow sufferers?

Be well.

Dr. C.

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