

Hematemesis

A Practical Guide For Patients



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**A Patient Guide to Understanding
Hematemesis**

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Table of contents

1. Introduction
2. What Causes Hematemesis?
3. Symptoms
4. Diagnosis
5. Diet
6. Medications
7. Therapies
8. Coping
9. FAQs
10. Take Action



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Introduction: Hematemesis

Hematemesis is the medical term for vomiting blood. It often signals bleeding in the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract, such as the stomach, esophagus, or duodenum.

The vomited blood may appear bright red (fresh bleeding) or look like coffee grounds (partially digested blood). This condition can be a sign of serious disorders like peptic ulcers, varices, or gastric cancer, and it requires urgent medical evaluation.



Key Takeaways

- Refers to vomiting blood from the upper GI tract.
- Can appear bright red or like coffee grounds.
- Often linked to ulcers, varices, or severe gastritis.
- Requires urgent medical attention.
- Early diagnosis improves outcomes.



What Causes Hematemesis?

Known Causes:

Hematemesis is caused by bleeding in the upper GI tract. Common causes include peptic ulcers, severe gastritis, esophageal varices (from liver disease), Mallory-Weiss tears (from forceful vomiting), trauma, or stomach and esophageal cancers. Risk factors include alcohol abuse, NSAID overuse, and chronic liver disease.



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Common Signs & Symptoms

Patients may experience vomiting blood, abdominal pain, dizziness, weakness, and black tarry stools. Severe cases can cause fainting and shock due to blood loss.

Core Symptoms Include:

- Vomiting blood (bright red or coffee-ground appearance)
- Abdominal discomfort or pain
- Black, tarry stools (melena)
- Dizziness and weakness
- Nausea before vomiting



Severe cases can also cause:

- Severe blood loss leading to shock
- Rapid heartbeat and low blood pressure
- Confusion or fainting
- Life-threatening hemorrhage
- Organ failure if untreated



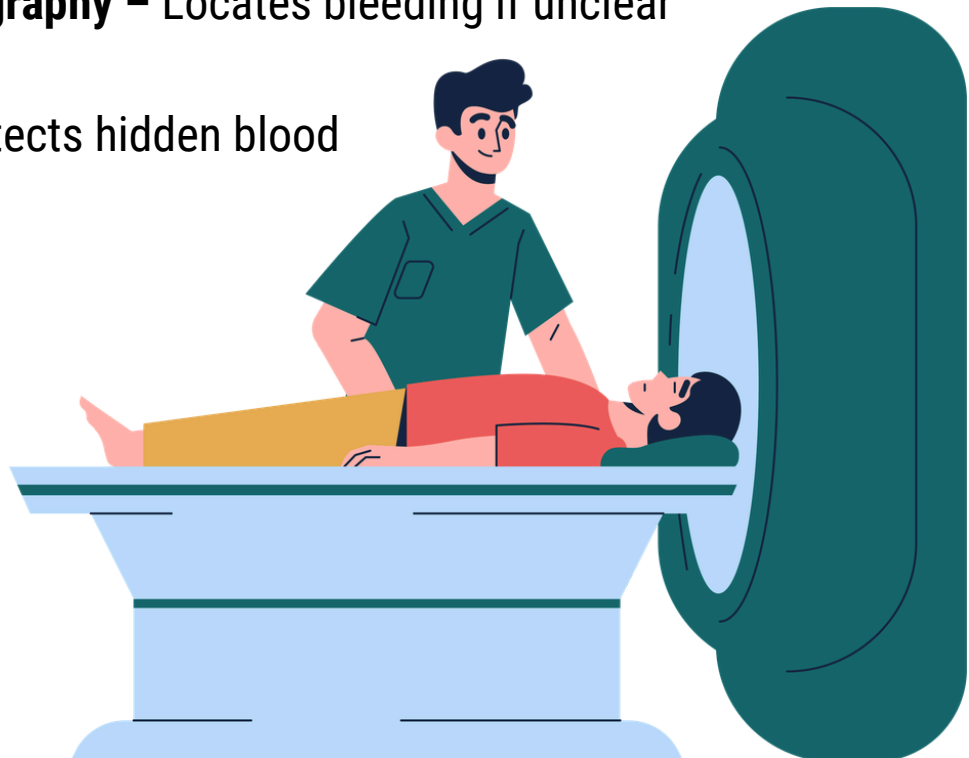
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Diagnosis & Medical Testing

Diagnosis involves emergency evaluation with endoscopy to locate bleeding, along with blood tests and imaging to assess severity and underlying cause.

Diagnostic Tools:

- **Upper endoscopy (EGD)** – Identifies bleeding source
- **Blood tests** – Check anemia, clotting, and liver function
- **Nasogastric lavage** – Confirms active bleeding
- **CT scan/angiography** – Locates bleeding if unclear
- **Stool test** – Detects hidden blood

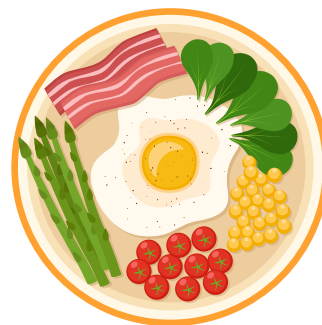


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Dietary changes are advised after treatment. Patients should eat soft, bland foods, avoid alcohol, caffeine, spicy and acidic foods, and focus on hydration for recovery.

Key Insights:

- **Eat bland, soft meals**
- **Avoid spicy and acidic foods**
- **Limit caffeine and alcohol**
- **Stay hydrated**
- **Eat smaller, frequent meals**
- **Include iron-rich foods if anemic**



Medications & Treatment Options

Treatment depends on the cause but may include acid-reducing drugs, antibiotics, or procedures to stop bleeding, along with supportive care like IV fluids and blood transfusions.

Treatment Options

- **Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs)** – Reduce stomach acid
- **Antibiotics** – For H. pylori-related ulcers
- **Octreotide** – For variceal bleeding
- **Blood transfusions** – Restore lost blood
- **IV fluids** – Stabilize patient



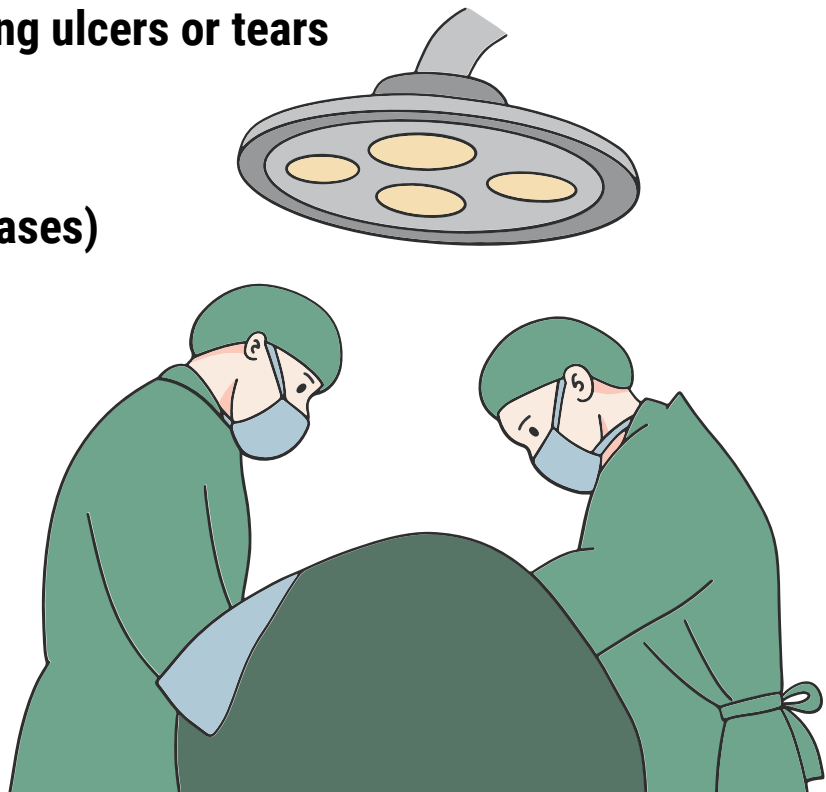
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Advanced Therapies & Procedures

Severe cases may require advanced procedures such as endoscopic banding, cauterization, angiographic embolization, or surgery if bleeding cannot be controlled.

Therapy Options:

- **Endoscopic band ligation (for varices)**
- **Endoscopic cautery or clips**
- **Angiographic embolization**
- **Surgery to repair bleeding ulcers or tears**
- **Liver transplant
(in advanced cirrhosis cases)**



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Coping With Hematemesis

Coping requires lifestyle changes, adherence to medications, avoiding alcohol and NSAIDs, regular follow-ups, and managing underlying conditions like ulcers or liver disease.

Practical Strategies

- **Avoid smoking and alcohol**
- **Limit NSAID or aspirin use**
- **Follow prescribed medications**
- **Eat a gentle, stomach-friendly diet**
- **Keep medical appointments**
- **Report recurrence immediately**





Q1: Is vomiting blood always an emergency?

A: Yes, hematemesis always requires immediate medical evaluation.

Q2: What does coffee-ground vomit mean?

A: It indicates older, partially digested blood from stomach bleeding.

Q3: Can ulcers cause hematemesis?

A: Yes, peptic ulcers are a leading cause of vomiting blood.

Q4: How is hematemesis treated?

A: Treatment includes stabilizing the patient, medications, endoscopy, and sometimes surgery.



Take Action

If you experience **Hematemesis**, don't ignore them. Early diagnosis and treatment can prevent complications. Schedule a consultation with **GastroDoxs** for expert guidance on managing your digestive health.

For additional resources, visit GastroDoxs.com.

**Your health starts with knowledge.
Take the first step today!**

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT



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