

# Nausea and Headaches

## Information Sheet

### Do you experience nausea or headaches in class?

It is normal for one in five people to experience nausea or headaches when they first start doing yoga. This can be caused by tightness in the neck muscles or scoliosis in the cervical spine. A nerve called the vagus nerve runs through the neck and down into the stomach, when the muscles release and this nerve releases, the digestive system can be affected and cause the sensation of nausea.

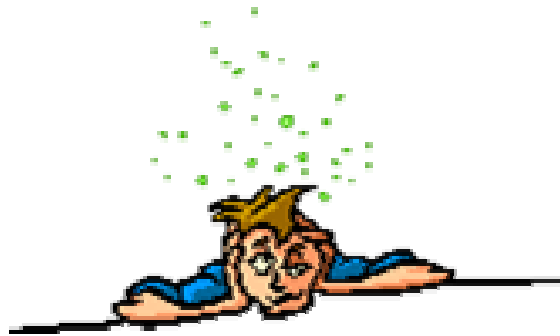
For most people the nausea should cease after the first or second class, however if not, try bringing a small pillow or a book to class to place underneath the head to flatten the cervical spine. This will give the correct alignment for the cervical spine – so the chin tucks into the chest a little instead of pointing up toward the ceiling. Ask your instructor to see if they think a pillow would be beneficial for you.

Other things you can try if you suffer from nausea:

- Do not eat a large meal before coming to class, at the same time its best not to be really hungry – exercising with low blood sugar can cause nausea. Its best to have something light an hour or two before class.
- There is an acupressure point located on the wrist which is very effective at alleviating nausea. The point is two and a half finger widths up the arm from the wrist in between the two forearm bones. You may need to push the tendon to one side and press at an angle. Hold this point while breathing gently for a minute or two on each wrist.



- If you do feel nauseas, sitting in the kneeling position is best because it gives the most comfort to the digestive system, however if you do prefer to lie down make sure you do that until the nausea passes.
- Keep in mind that nausea is not always a bad thing. Yoga causes changes in the endocrine system and the nervous system. Usually these changes are gradual and go unnoticed, however sometimes if they occur too quickly then one may experience nausea, dizziness, headaches or hot flushes.



Always feel free to talk to your instructor about any problems that you experience in class or after – they are there to help