

From the perspective of a US emergency physician, here are my thoughts and experiences on the medications we have used and continue to use.

Dramamine, Antivert, Meclizine, and Bonine are all the same drug, just in different milligram amounts of the drug meclizine. 12.5 mg, 25 mg, up to 50 mg at a time for severe symptoms. Best if taken early, before the vomiting occurs, and when symptoms are starting to take hold. They come in tablets or dissolvable pills, and are very well tolerated in most people. Importantly, in the US they are all over the counter. It is ok to break a 25 mg tablet in half.

For those in the US, and especially for those traveling with kids, most US doctors will give you a prescription for Zofran, or Ondansetron, which works exceptionally well for the vomiting and has almost no side effects at all. Just explain the purpose and I can't imagine a doctor who would decline. The dose of Ondansetron is 4 mg but it can be tolerated in doses up to 16 mg and 32 mg for adults. Most of the time 4 mg is enough. Very effective.

We carry on board our boat, a healthy supply of these two drugs, Zofran and Meclizine.

Scopolamine patches are very effective, and I carry them, but haven't used them a ton since the others work so well, with less side effects. The nice part of this one is that if you start to get the side effects that are uncomfortable, you can just remove the patches and they will go away with some Benadryl or diphenhydramine.

We also carry Compazine and Phenergan on board, but similar to scopolamine, the risk of side effects are slightly higher. These work well, if the vomiting has already started, and can be given rectally as well, but the rectal suppositories need to be kept cool to avoid melting. You manage these side effects with Benadryl as well.

In order of preference,

For adults, Meclizine, Ondansetron, Scopolamine, and then lastly Phenergan or Compazine whichever is on board.

For kids under about 10 years of age, ondansetron, ondansetron, ondansetron.

The other points are well made about watching the horizon, and staying topside. Ginger snaps, or ginger ale are nice mild remedies as ginger has some anti nausea properties. We try to encourage liquids in small sips mouthful every 5- 10 minutes, as soon as the medications take effect and then to encourage dry snacks like granola, or crackers, while the meds are working.

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