



Dyspepsia / Acid Reflux

Acid reflux is a form of indigestion. It is caused when acid in the stomach, that helps to break down our food, rises up the tube which connects the stomach to the mouth, called the oesophagus or gullet. Sometimes this can reach as far as the mouth or be felt at the back of the throat, causing a burning sensation.

Why does it happen?

Acid reflux may be caused, or increased, by what we eat and/or drink, how we eat and drink, our lifestyles and medicines we take.

What are the symptoms?

The symptoms can include the following:

- Heartburn
- Excessive wind
- Sudden surge of stomach contents into the food pipe causing burning sensation in the chest or even into the mouth with bitter tasting fluid.

What can I do to help?

There are many things you can do to help reduce the risk, frequency and/or severity of attacks of acid reflux.

Eating Pattern

- Eat small regular meals
- Avoid eating large meals
- Try not to miss meals
- Take time to chew properly and relax at mealtimes to give yourself a chance to digest the food
- Avoid eating late at night or just before bed

Types of food

Some foods slow down the emptying of the stomach and so aggravate reflux. Try to reduce your intake or avoid the following foods:

- Fizzy drinks
- Spicy foods
- Onions
- Citrus fruits
- Fatty foods e.g. full fat cheese, cream, cakes, pies, pastries
- Caffeine containing drinks e.g. tea, coffee, fizzy drinks.



Posture

Poor posture can worsen symptoms, so try the following:

- Eat sitting upright
- Avoid bending or lying down immediately after eating
- Wear looser clothing around your stomach, avoid tight waist bands, belts or control underwear
- If your symptoms are bad at night, you may find it beneficial to sleep in a more upright position. You could do this by using extra pillows or raise the head end of the bed on bricks or blocks.

Lifestyle

- Stop smoking
- Limit your alcohol intake or avoid it completely
- If you are overweight, try to reduce it. Ideally this should be a combination of a reduced calorie intake and increased physical exercise. Lowering your weight helps to reduce pressure on your stomach and prevent its contents escaping upward into the oesophagus.

You may find it helpful to write down everything you eat and drink for a few days and record when you suffer from acid reflux. This may help you to identify any particular foods that are making your symptoms worse.

If your symptoms change or worsen, particularly if you have any new and persisting stomach problems, please do not hesitate to talk to your doctor or your practice nurse.



Languages/ Alternative Formats

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format. Please contact: 01895 279973

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Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poprosz pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem informacji pacjenta (patient information) pod numerem telefonu: 01895 279973.

如果你需要這些資料的其他語言版本、大字体、或音頻格式，請致電01895 279 973 查詢。

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