



GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX DISEASE

WHAT IS GERD?

Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)

occurs when stomach acid repeatedly flows back into the tube connecting your mouth and stomach (esophagus). The acid reflux can irritate the lining of your esophagus.

Many people experience acid reflux from time to time. When acid reflux happens repeatedly over time it causes GERD.

Most people are able to manage the discomfort with lifestyle change and medications.

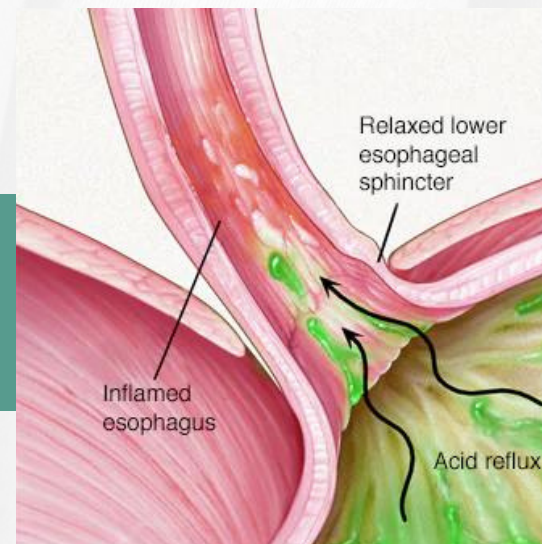
SYMPTOMS

- Burning sensation in your chest (heartburn), usually after eating, may be worse when lying down
- Backwash (regurgitation) of food or sour liquid
- Upper abdominal or chest pain
- Trouble swallowing (dysphagia)
- Sensation of a lump in your throat

Nighttime acid reflux may cause symptoms such as: Ongoing cough, Inflammation of the vocal cords, New or worsening asthma

TREATMENT

1. **Antacids that neutralize stomach acid** (mylanta, rolaids, tums) provide quick relief but don't heal inflamed esophagus
2. **Medications to reduce acid production** (Histamine blockers, pepcid). Provide longer relief and may decrease acid production from stomach for up to 12 hours (Over the counter and prescription forms)
3. **Medication that block acid production** and heal the esophagus (proton pump inhibitors such as omeprazole). (Over the counter and prescription forms)



HOW ARE YOU DIAGNOSED?

- Signs and symptoms and physical examination
- Upper endoscopy
- Ambulatory acid probe test
- X-ray of upper digestive system

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Stop smoking
- Don't lie down after a meal
- Eat food slowly and chew thoroughly
- Avoid tight fitting clothing
- Avoid foods and drinks that trigger reflux such as:
 - Alcohol, chocolate, caffeine, fatty foods or peppermint
- If you experience nighttime acid reflux
- Elevate the head of your bed
- Lay on your left side