

## Gastro Esophageal Reflux Disease

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### About the Study

When stomach acid runs back into the tube that connects your mouth and stomach, it's called gastro esophageal reflux disease (GERD) (esophagus). Acid reflux (backwash) can aggravate the esophageal lining.

Acid reflux affects many people at some point in their lives. Mild acid reflux that occurs at least twice a week or moderate to severe acid reflux that occurs at least once a week is considered GERD. The majority of patients with GERD can control their symptoms with a mix of lifestyle changes and over-the-counter medications. Some people with GERD, however, may require stronger drugs or surgery to alleviate their symptoms.

### Causes of GERD

"Gastro-esophageal" refers to the stomach and esophagus. The word "reflux" means "to return" or "to flow back." When the contents of your stomach make their way up into your esophagus, it's called reflux, (gastro-esophageal reflux).

Your LES opens to enable food into your stomach during regular digestion. The valve then closes, preventing food and acidic stomach fluids from returning to your esophagus. When the LES is weak or relaxes when it shouldn't, it causes gastro-esophageal reflux. This allows the contents of the stomach to flow up into the esophagus.

### GERD (chronic acid reflux) symptoms

GERD affects various people in different ways. The following are the common signs and symptoms:

- Heartburn.
- Refusal to eat (food comes back into your mouth from the esophagus).
- The sensation of food becoming stuck in your throat.
- Coughing.
- Pain in the chest.
- Having difficulty swallowing.
- Vomiting.
- Hoarseness and a sore throat
- GERD symptoms can be similar in infants and children, including:
  - Small bouts of vomiting on a regular basis.
  - Excessive crying and a refusal to eat (in babies and infants).
  - Other breathing (respiratory) issues.

- Acidic sour flavour, particularly when lying down.
- Hoarseness in the throat.
- Choking sensation that may cause the youngster to wake awake.
- Bad breath is a problem.
- Sleep disturbances after feeding, particularly in new born.

### How to differentiate between heartburn and heart attack

Heartburn can create chest pain that makes you think you're having a heart attack. Heartburn has nothing to do with your heart, but because the discomfort occurs in your chest, it can be difficult to distinguish between the two. The symptoms of a heart attack, on the other hand, are not the same as heartburn. A burning sensation or ache in the chest that can travel to the neck and throat is known as heartburn.

Heartburn is an unpleasant burning sensation or pain in the chest that can spread to the neck and throat. Symptoms of a heart attack include discomfort in the arms, neck, and jaw, as well as shortness of breath, perspiration, nausea, dizziness, excessive weariness, and worry.

### GERD treatment and home remedies

The goal of GERD treatment is to reduce the quantity of reflux or diminish the damage that refluxed materials cause to the esophageal lining.

To treat your symptoms, your doctor may prescribe over-the-counter or prescription drugs.

- These medications can assist to neutralize acid in the esophagus and stomach, so preventing heartburn. Long-term use of antacids, on the other hand, can result in diarrhoea, a shift in calcium metabolism (how the body breaks down and uses calcium), and a magnesium build up in the body.
- If you have chronic heartburn or reflux, your doctor may prescribe drugs to limit the amount of acid in your stomach. H2 blockers, for example, help to prevent acid output in the stomach. Cimetidine (Tagamet), famotidine (Pepcid), and nizatidine are examples of H2 blockers.
- sometimes known as acid pumps, are medications that prevent the production of stomach acid by blocking a protein.
- These medications can help your stomach empty faster, resulting in less acid being left behind. Bloating, nausea, and

vomiting are some of the symptoms that they may help with. They can, however, have major negative effects.

### Diet and Lifestyle Changes

Doctors recommend making a few lifestyle adjustments to help alleviate GERD symptoms.

- Chocolate, peppermint, fatty foods, coffee, and alcoholic beverages are all items that can relax the LES.
- Smaller meal quantities may also aid in symptom management. Additionally, eating meals at least 2 to 3 hours before bedtime allows your stomach acid to subside and your stomach to partially empty.
- Eat Slowly
- Make sure you chew your food completely.
- The LES is weakened by cigarette smoking. It is critical to quit smoking in order to alleviate GERD symptoms.
- Maintain a healthy body weight: Obesity frequently exacerbates symptoms. When people who are overweight lose weight, they often feel better.
- Acupuncture: In one trial, acupuncture treatment reduced reflux in the test group faster than PPIs, with longer-lasting benefits. More large studies are needed to prove this, but the early results are encouraging.