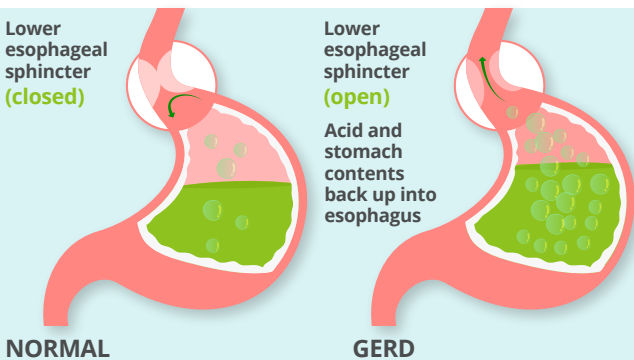


GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX DISEASE (GERD)



What is it?

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) is when the acid backs up out of the stomach and into the esophagus, possibly all the way up to your throat and mouth. It is a result from excess acid from gastric secretions irritating the lower esophagus, which can result in pain or the formation of ulcers or strictures. It can also lead to a “pre-malignant” condition known as Barrett’s esophagus.



What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can vary but most commonly include:

- ✓ Burning in the chest or throat, or an acid taste in the mouth
- ✓ Stomach or chest pain
- ✓ Nausea and/or vomiting
- ✓ Difficulty swallowing
- ✓ Sore throat or hoarse voice
- ✓ Cough

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What can I do to prevent symptoms?

There are many lifestyle modifications that can alleviate and prevent symptoms. If these lifestyle modifications do not help to alleviate symptoms, over the counter or prescription medications may be used as an adjunct to the lifestyle modifications.

Foods to Avoid



Coffee (with/without caffeine) and other caffeinated beverages

- *Relaxes the lower esophageal sphincter*



Citrus fruits (oranges/pineapple)

- *Highly acidic*



Tomatoes and tomato based products

like pizza/pasta sauces

- *Highly acidic*



Carbonated beverages

- *Cause gaseous distension of the stomach/bloating which increases the pressure on the lower esophageal sphincter*



Chocolate

- *Contains methyloxanthine, which is similar to caffeine*



Peppermint, licorice, garlic, onion

- *Relaxes the lower esophageal sphincter*



Fatty, spicy, or fried foods

- *Relaxes the lower esophageal sphincter*

Other lifestyle modifications

- ✓ **Obesity** – Start a weight reduction program if you are overweight
- ✓ **Remain upright** for at least 2 hours after meals and avoid late night meals and snacks
- ✓ **DO NOT OVEREAT**
- ✓ **Elevate the head of your bed** – use 2"-6" blocks or large juice cans filled with sand. Extra pillows or a wedge is not sufficient.
- ✓ **NO NSAIDS or ASPIRIN** – such as Ibuprofen, Aleve, Excedrin, Alka Seltzer, Goody Powders, Motrin
- ✓ **Avoid excessive bending or stooping** – this promotes reflux. When you exercise, try to do so on an empty stomach.
- ✓ **Avoid constipation and excessive straining.**
- ✓ **QUIT SMOKING!!!**
- ✓ **AVOID ALCOHOL**

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