

LIFESTYLE CHANGES

The following are suggested lifestyle changes that may reduce reflux:

- Obesity promotes reflux. Try to achieve an optimal weight
- Avoid tight clothing around the midsection of the body
- Use abdominal breathing. Let your Abdomen expand with each breath
- Elevate the head of your bed with blocks, 4 to 6 inches. Extra pillows are not as effective. Do not eat for 3 hours before lying down.

LOOKING AT DIET

Here are some additional factors that may improve symptoms of reflux:

- Eat small meals, up to 6 times each day
- Caffeine and nicotine increase reflux. Stopping the use of these addictive chemicals will help relieve the reflux symptoms.
- Avoid foods that cause heartburn such as tomatoes, spicy foods, and citrus fruits. Some fruit juices are irritating as well as acid producing.
- Include protein with each meal and reduce your fat intake.
- Although throat lozenges may temporarily reduce symptoms, they cause more reflux. Avoid cough drops and mouthwashes.

ANTACIDS

Antacids may be used to neutralize stomach acids and should be taken half an hour after each meal and at bedtime.

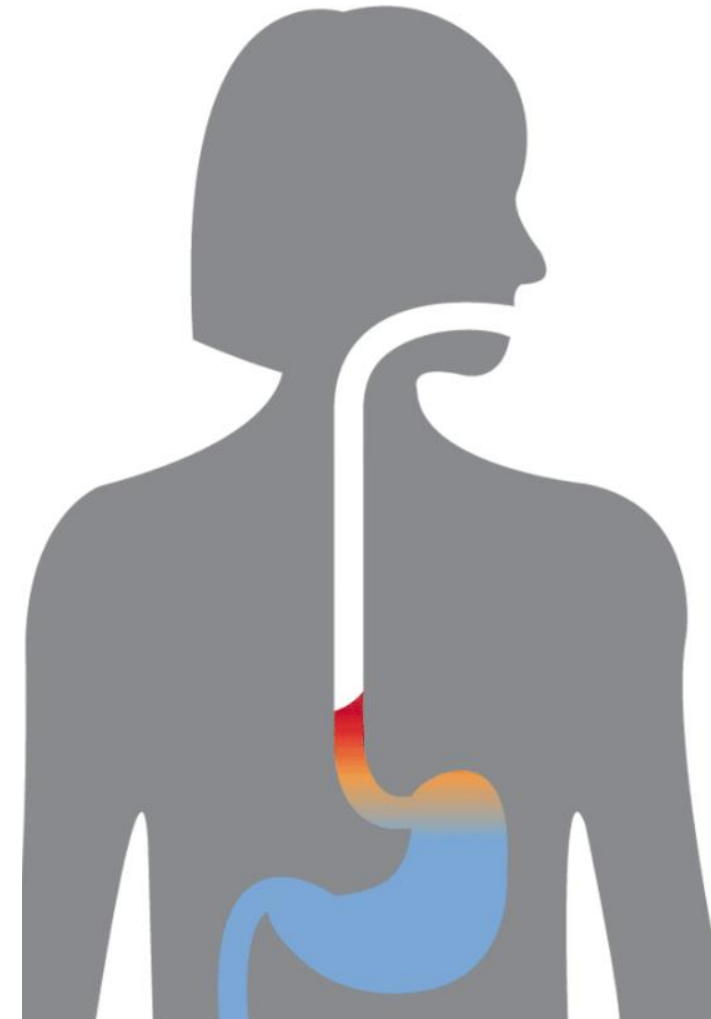
OVER THE COUNTER

Examples include: TUMS, Maalox, Mylanta, and Gaviscon. Acid production can be blocked by medications, some of which can be purchased without a prescription (e.g. Pepcid, Zantac).

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS

The most commonly prescribed drugs for reflux throat problems are called proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), which stop the stomach from producing acid. This group includes Pantoloc, Prevacid, Nexium, Losec and Pariet. They are usually taken first thing in the morning and last for 24 hours. They may need to be taken daily for up to three months for the full effect to be gained. Other medications may be suggested by your doctor.

THROAT PROBLEMS & GASTRO ESOPHAGEAL REFLUX



WHAT IS REFLUX?

Stomach contents are normally acidic and are generally kept in the stomach by a valve at the lower end of the esophagus. Reflux is the term used when the stomach acids come back up into the esophagus or throat. Symptoms result from direct acid irritation, or reflex tightening of the throat muscles.

The sense of a lump in the throat, called globus, may result from chronic reflux laryngitis or from increased tension in the upper esophageal opening behind the voice box. The resulting increase in secretions in the throat leads to habitual throat clearing.

These increased secretions may be mistaken as postnasal drip or phlegm. A person with nighttime reflux will frequently awaken with a sore, irritated throat and a gravelly. Muscle tension in the larynx may lead to vocal difficulty, trouble swallowing, and in severe cases, to choking spells and airway obstruction.

Heartburn, the typical symptom of reflux, may be present when the throat is affected.

Treatment is directed at keeping the stomach contents where they belong and neutralizing them, and then reflux is less likely to occur.

| FOODTYPE: | ALLOWED: | AVOID: |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Beverages | Skim-milk, non-cola drinks, non-carbonated beverages, herbal teas | Whole milk or cream, citrus juices, alcohol, caffeine, carbonated beverages |
| Breads & Cereals | Enriched white, whole-wheat or rye bread, soda/graham crackers, all cereals | Egg breads, sweet rolls, doughnuts, waffles, pancakes, granola type cereals |
| Cheeses | Low fat cottage cheese, cheese from skim milk | Cheese from whole milk, processed cheese |
| Desserts | Fruit, fruit ices, gelatin desserts, angel food cake, popsicles, homemade cakes, pies, pudding made with skin milk | Chocolate, peppermint, nuts, coconut, high fat desserts, high fat cakes, pies, ice-cream |
| Eggs | 1 egg daily | Too many eggs |
| Fats | 3 teaspoon equivalent daily (e.g. tsps. Butter or oil) | Fried foods, gravy |
| Fruits | No overly acidic or fatty fruits. All are allowed except those listed in the AVOID column | Avocado, lemons, limes, grapefruit, oranges, pineapple, tomatoes |
| Nuts | None | All |
| Herbs & Seasonings | Salt, mild spices, herbs, flavouring extracts | Peppermint, spearmint, curry, pepper, hot spices, chili. Horseradish, olives |
| Potatoes & Substitutes | White or sweet potatoes prepared with the allowed amount of fat, macaroni, rice, noodles, spaghetti, hot & dry cereals | Potato chips, deep fried potatoes |
| Soup | Chicken or beef broth, soups made from recommended foods | Cream soups made from whole milk or animal fat |
| Sweets | Honey, jam, jelly, sugar, marshmallows | Chocolate, coconut, nuts, hard candy, chewing gum, cough drops, lozenges |