

GERD

GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX DISEASE

Patient Information



What is GERD?

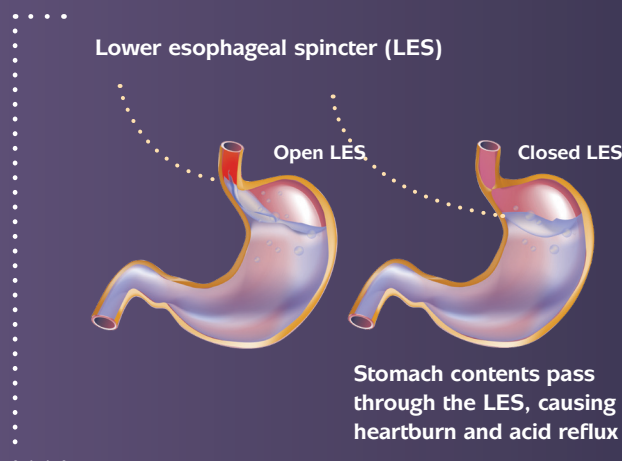
GERD is a condition in which food from the stomach leaks back into the esophagus, the tube that connects your mouth to your stomach.

What are the symptoms of GERD?

- Feeling that food is stuck behind the breastbone
- Heartburn
- Nausea after eating
- Bringing food back up (regurgitation)
- Cough
- Difficulty swallowing
- Hoarseness or change in voice
- Sore throat

What causes GERD?

After we eat, food is carried into the stomach from the mouth through the esophagus. At the lower end of the esophagus, where it joins the stomach, there is a ring of muscle fibers called the lower esophageal sphincter, or LES. In GERD, the LES doesn't close properly causing food to leak back into the esophagus.



How is GERD diagnosed?

- Your doctor will perform a physical exam and ask about your medical history.
- In some cases, an endoscopy will be performed to confirm the diagnosis.



How is GERD controlled?

- Medications that reduce acid production in the stomach.
- Medications that strengthen the lower esophageal sphincter.
- If you feel like your daily medicine isn't working to control your GERD symptoms, contact your doctor.



Lifestyle modifications

- If you are a smoker, talk to us about helping you quit.
- Don't drink alcohol.
- Lose weight if overweight or obese.
- Avoid foods that cause heartburn, such as fried or fatty foods, chocolate, garlic, tomato, caffeine, etc.
- Eat smaller meals at a time.
- Avoid tight fitting clothes that put pressure on your waist or stomach.
- Wait for at least 2-3 hours after a meal before lying down.
- To prevent nighttime heartburn, elevate the head of the bed by 6-9 inches. Extra pillows that raise the head may not help. You can use a wedge support to raise the top half of your body.



This information is intended for general reference only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice.



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