

GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX (GERD) / LARYNGOPHARYNGEAL REFLUX (LPR)

What is reflux?

Reflux is the backflow of stomach contents into the esophagus and potentially all the way up to the voice box (larynx) and throat (pharynx). Classic reflux (heartburn, sour or bitter taste, burping, belching) is commonly referred to as GERD. In recent years, we have come to realize that reflux can lead to many other symptoms in the throat (**hoarseness, throat clearing, sensation of a foreign body in the throat**) and is referred to as **LPR**. Many people have symptoms of LPR without classic GERD symptoms. Frequently, the only indications of reflux are the symptoms of LPR and a distinct appearance of your voice box on a scope exam. Very small quantities of stomach contents can lead to significant throat and voice symptoms. LPR is thus typically treated with larger doses of medications for a longer period of time than is typical with GERD.

DIETARY INSTRUCTIONS

1. Several **small meals** over the day, rather than one large meal. Dinner should be light. Take liquids between meals. Do not overload your stomach.
2. Don't lie down sooner than **two hours** after eating.
3. Avoid:
 - **Alcohol**
 - **Carbonated beverages**
 - **Spicy foods**
 - **Greasy and/or Fried foods**
 - **Fatty foods**
 - **Chocolate**
 - **Caffeine**
 - **Tomatoes & Tomato sauce**
 - **Citrus**
 - **Mint, Peppermint**
 - **Tobacco**

MECHANICAL AIDS

1. Gravity can help to keep gastric acid in the stomach. **Elevate the head of your bed 6 inches** by putting two concrete blocks or telephone books under the top legs of the bed. Just propping your head up with pillows is often not effective.
2. Avoid bending, stooping, and heavy lifting.
3. **Lose weight** – overweight people are more likely to have reflux for a few different reasons. Simply the extra weight on your abdomen can keep the stomach and intestines from expanding properly after you eat.

4. **Wear loose clothing** – tight, restrictive clothing can also prevent food from passing forward through your gastrointestinal tract and result in a higher likelihood of reflux.

MEDICATIONS

1. Antacids are useful. During the day, take antacid tablets after meals and between meals. On retiring, take a tablespoon of liquid antacid. This can be repeated during the night if awakened by symptoms.
2. Other medications may be prescribed if necessary.

REMEMBER: FOR TREATMENT TO BE EFFECTIVE, IT MUST BE CARRIED OUT 24 HOURS A DAY, 365 DAYS A YEAR>