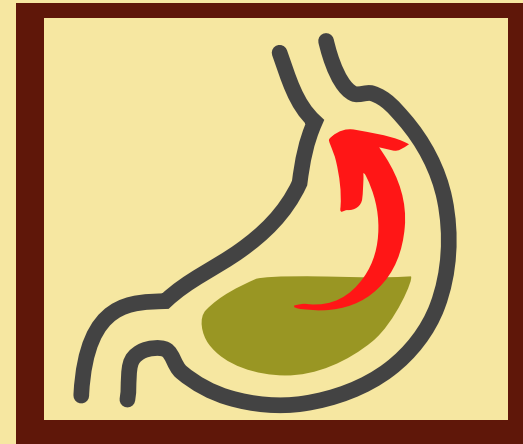




# GASTRO-ESOPHAGEAL REFLUX DISEASE (G.E.R.D.)



## What is GERD?

GERD is chronic acid reflux, when acidic stomach contents persistently flow up through esophagus. GERD is not life threatening, but can lead to more serious health problems.

## Signs and symptoms:

- heartburn
- regurgitation
- feeling of food caught in throat
- coughing
- chest pain
- problem swallowing
- vomiting
- sore throat and hoarseness

## What causes GERD?

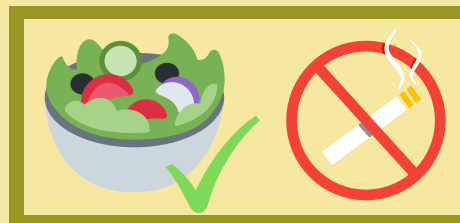
- Weakness or relaxation of the **lower esophageal sphincter**
- Too much pressure on the abdomen
- Certain foods: Spicy, dairy, or fried
- Certain types of medications that treat asthma, blood pressure, or allergies; as well as painkillers, sedatives, and antidepressants.
- Hiatal hernia: upper part of the stomach bulging into the diaphragm

## How is it treated?

- **Over the counter antacid medications:**
  - Tums
  - Rolaids
  - Mylanta
  - Riopan
  - Maalox
- **Prescription medications:**
  - H-2 receptor blockers
  - proton pump inhibitors
  - baclofen
- Surgery, if not responding to medications.

## How to prevent GERD or alleviate symptoms:

- maintain a healthy weight
- eat small, frequent meals
- reduce fat intake; avoid trigger foods
- sit upright while eating and stay upright 45-60 minutes after eating
- elevate head of bed 6-8 inches while sleeping
- wear clothes that do not restrict abdomen
- avoid smoking



Check out the latest updates and more details from **the Mayo Clinic:**



## When to call UHS:

You experience acid reflux/heartburn **more than twice a week** over a period of several weeks, constantly take antacids and your symptoms keep returning.

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