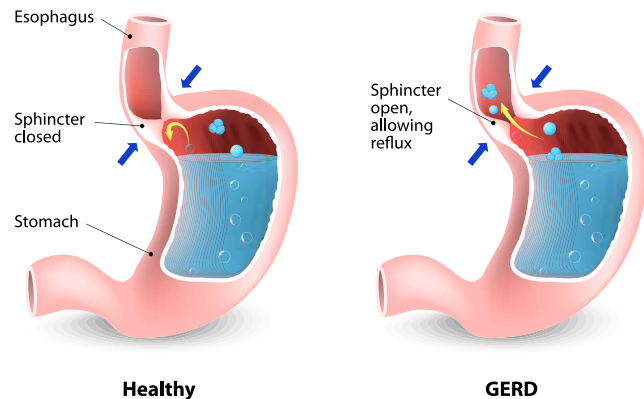


What is Acid Reflux Disease?

Acid reflux, also known as “Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD)” occurs when stomach acid frequently flows back into the tube connecting the mouth and stomach (esophagus). This backwash (acid reflux) can irritate the lining of the esophagus.

Gastroesophageal reflux disease



What are the symptoms?

Common signs and symptoms of GERD include a burning sensation in your chest (heartburn), usually after eating, which may be worse at night. Regurgitation of food or sour liquid can also occur. Some patients experience a sensation of lump in the throat due to reflux.

What are atypical Reflux symptoms?

In addition to the typical reflux symptoms mentioned above, patients can experience atypical symptoms such as chronic cough, laryngitis, hoarseness, chest pain and asthma.

What are the causes of Reflux?

At the bottom of the food pipe (esophagus), there is a circular band of muscle called the lower esophageal sphincter. When an individual swallows, this sphincter relaxes to allow food and liquid to flow into your stomach, then it closes again, practically acting as a valve. If the sphincter relaxes abnormally or weakens, stomach acid can flow back up into the esophagus. This constant backwash of acid irritates the lining of your esophagus, often causing it to become inflamed.

What are the risk factors?

Conditions that can increase the risk of acid reflux include obesity, hiatal hernia (bulging of the top of the stomach up into the diaphragm), pregnancy, certain diseases such as scleroderma, and delayed stomach emptying.

Factors that can aggravate acid reflux include smoking, eating large meals or eating late at night, eating certain foods (triggers) such as fatty or fried food, and drinking certain beverages, such as citrus juices, alcohol or coffee.

What are the complications of Reflux?

Over time, chronic inflammation in the esophagus can cause narrowing of the esophagus (esophageal stricture) which will manifest as difficulty in swallowing.

Acid can damage tissue in the esophagus, causing a sore (ulcer) to form. An esophageal ulcer can bleed, cause pain and make swallowing difficult.

Damage from acid can cause changes in the tissue lining the lower esophagus leading to precancerous cells. These changes are associated with an increased risk of esophageal cancer.

How is acid Reflux diagnosed and managed?

Multiple tests are available to investigate symptoms of reflux. Your physician will decide if your symptoms require the performance of tests, which may include gastroscopy (also known as upper endoscopy, a test done to visualize the inside of esophagus and stomach), imaging studies, and 24-hour pH study (a test that measures the acid in the esophagus).

Management of this condition is based on lifestyle modifications, medications to suppress acid, and in rare cases surgical intervention.



Acid Reflux Disease

For any questions or clarifications do not hesitate to call your doctor or call Endoscopy unit

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