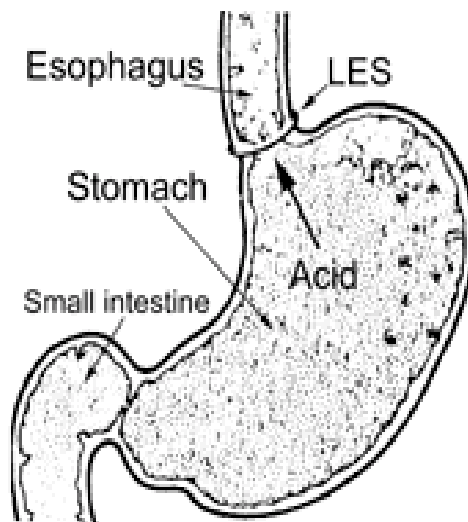


GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX PREVENTION

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is gastro-esophageal reflux?

Gastroesophageal refers to the stomach and esophagus. Reflux means to flow back or return. Therefore, gastroesophageal reflux is the return of the stomach's contents back up into the esophagus. Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) is a digestive disorder that affects the muscle that connects the esophagus with the stomach, called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). Heartburn or acid indigestion caused by GERD is a common cause of discomfort in Americans. GERD is sometimes due to a condition called hiatal hernia. Very often, heartburn can be relieved through diet and lifestyle changes. If recommended changes do not improve symptoms, medication or surgery may be necessary. The picture below shows the location of the LES in relation to the esophagus and the stomach.



*Source: National Institute of Diabetes, Kidney and Digestive Diseases
<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/digest/pubs/heartbrn/heartbrn.htm#gastro>*

What diet and lifestyle changes can I make to avoid reflux?

DIET/MEDICATION RESTRICTIONS	LIFESTYLE CHANGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NO alcohol.• NO aspirin (or aspirin products), Advil, Aleve, Celebrex, Vioxx or any non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory medication. <i>(Consult with your physician if you are taking these medications.)</i>• NO smoking.• NO caffeine in coffee, tea, soda, chocolate (decaffeinated versions are permitted).• NO fried foods or red meat. Eat only broiled chicken, fish, turkey or veal.• NO black pepper, red pepper, curry, cayenne pepper, jalapeno, chili or peppermint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NO food for two hours before sleep.• Allow your food to digest. Wait 30 minutes after eating before initiating exercise.• Elevate head of bed 6 inches.• Eat moderate amounts of food at mealtime.• Do not overeat and watch your weight. Extra weight increases intra-abdominal pressure which can aggravate reflux.• Avoid restrictive clothing around your waist.

In addition to the recommended diet and lifestyle changes, your physician has prescribed the following medication: _____

Remember, it is very important to take your full course of medication as prescribed by your physician. If you have questions about this medication, please consult your physician or pharmacist.

How can I get more information on GERD?

The National Institute of Diabetes, Kidney and Digestive Diseases (a division of the National Institutes of Health) provides a complete Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease patient information guide on their website at the following web address:

<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/digest/pubs/heartbrn/heartbrn.htm#gastro>

Reference: National Digestive Diseases Information Clearinghouse:
<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/digest/nddic.htm>

For more Patient Education Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at www.greenhosp.org and click on Patients & Visitors, then Patient Education