

Acid Reflux Disease

By Phil Phine

Acid Reflux Disease

Commonly called 'heart burn', acid reflux disease is a condition in which the liquid content of the stomach regurgitates (backs up, or refluxes) into the esophagus. It's annoying and painful. But you want to know the truth, the reflux of the stomach's liquid contents into the esophagus occurs in most normal individuals. However, when heartburn becomes acid reflux disease or Gastro esophageal reflux disease, commonly referred to as GERD, it is a real problem. That is because with GERD, the acid is stronger and stays in the esophagus longer causing more discomfort.

Most often, you will experience this during the daytime when you are upright, sitting straight, or standing. Your body handles this reflux by the fluid flowing back down into your stomach. You swallow more during the daytime therefore draining the acid back to where it belongs. Your salivary glands produce saliva that also contains bicarbonate that acts to neutralize the acid your stomach has kicked up.

At night though, you may have a greater problem when acid reflux disease occurs that is because while sleeping, gravity does not work as well lying down, your constant swallowing stops, and the production of saliva is reduced.

Certain conditions make a person more prone to acid reflux disease, this GERD. For example, while you are pregnant, this can be a serious problem. Elevated hormone levels of pregnancy probably cause reflux by lowering the pressure in that part of your body known as the lower esophageal sphincter. Also, the growing baby puts more pressure on the abdomen. Both of these effects of pregnancy tend to increase the risk of GERD.

If your acid reflux disease is a minor condition, then you should only experience minor symptoms. These would include primarily heartburn, regurgitation, and nausea. However, if the condition is complicated, then watch out for the following symptoms.

The liquid that comes back into the esophagus damages the lining of the esophagus. The body tries to protect itself from the acid reflux disease by 'inflaming' the esophagus. Trying to speed the healing process through the inflammation, the wall of the esophagus may form an ulcer. The ulcer is a break in the lining of the esophagus wall. Then what happens is that there may be bleeding. If the bleeding is very severe, patients might need a blood transfusion or even surgical treatment.

If your heartburn is severe or acute, happening very frequently, you need to see a doctor.

What can you do for yourself to help the condition? Try sleeping a pillow a night that raises your chest up slightly so that gravity can bring the acid back down more easily. Since this condition usually occurs on a full stomach, eat earlier and eat less to keep the stomach from being too full. Ease off on the chocolate, peppermint, alcohol, and caffeinated drinks. Reduce fatty foods and of course, cut down or quit smoking. Other foods may aggravate the conditions. Avoid spicy or acid-containing foods, like citrus juices, carbonated beverages, and tomato juice.

Phil Phine keeps fit and healthy, and writes for www.get-articles.com

[Get-Articles.com : 1000's of reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)