
“Heartburn”

Esophageal Reflux, Esophagitis

What is heartburn?

People experience “heartburn” in a variety of ways. It can feel like a burning or acid sensation in your stomach or esophagus. Sometimes an acid taste will occur in the back of your mouth or throat. It can be accompanied by nausea and it can last for several minutes or hours.

What can make it worse?

- Certain medications such as aspirin, naproxen (Aleve®), and ibuprofen (Advil®, Nuprin®, etc.)
 - Smoking, alcohol
 - Overeating and/or eating and drinking right before going to sleep
 - Spicy and/or greasy foods, tomatoes, citrus, caffeine, chocolate, and peppermint
 - Lying flat or bending over
 - Stress
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What can make it better?

- Take antacids (Maalox®, Mylanta®) -the liquid forms work better.
 - Avoid alcohol.
 - Eat small meals at regular intervals.
 - Avoid lying down immediately after eating/drinking.
 - Avoid foods and medications that aggravate your symptoms.
 - If you have heartburn at night, elevate the head of your bed about 6 inches, and avoid eating/drinking 2-3 hours before going to sleep.
 - Decrease or stop smoking.
 - Take other medications that may be recommended by your health care provider.
 - Decrease or avoid caffeine.
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Check with your health care provider

- If you have abdominal pain not controlled with antacid use or other prescribed medications.
 - If your stool appears black like tar or bloody.
 - If you are vomiting blood.
 - If you appear pale or are experiencing dizziness or weakness.
 - If your symptoms keep recurring frequently, e.g. three times a week or more.
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Check our website: www.uhs.berkeley.edu to learn more about this medical concern or others.

For an appointment www.uhs.berkeley.edu or call **510-642-2000**

Clinic Nurse **510-643-7197** for advice