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Heartburn!!!

Back Door Reading From your Health Ministry

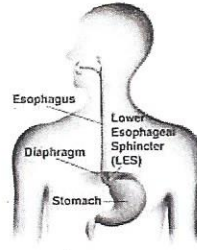


GERD

It stands for **G**astro **E**sophageal **R**eflux **D**isease
Is it any wonder it is abbreviated?

GERD (or chronic heartburn) actually has nothing to do with the heart.

It is acid from the stomach spilling up into the esophagus and causing a burning chest pain.



GERD is usually defined as having heartburn daily, although it may be present without symptoms.

Diagnosis is made by examining the esophagus with a special scope.



It is possible to have symptoms without tissue damage, or to have damage without symptoms. GERD actually refers to the damage, not the symptoms.

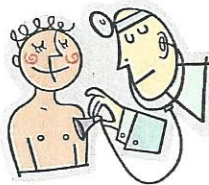


Occasional heartburn after eating spicy foods is normal. Heartburn that regularly occurs more often than twice a week should be investigated.

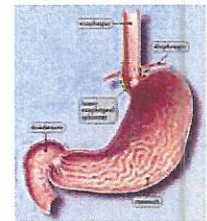


Self diagnosis of GERD can lead to mismanagement and complications.

If you have frequent symptoms, see your care provider.



GERD is usually treated with prescription medications. They control acid and allow the esophagus to heal, but do not cure the condition. Medication usually needs to be continued.



Tips to manage heartburn:

- * Don't lie down right after eating.
- * Avoid foods that trigger your heartburn.
- * Avoid exertion right after meals.
- * Drink plenty of water when taking pills.
- * Eat small meals.

Surgery is a possible treatment in some cases, but is only used when less invasive measures have failed.

Foods that increase stomach acid and may cause trouble include:



- * Fats
- * Chocolate
- * Onions
- * Citrus fruits & juice
- * Coffee, tea, cola
- * Alcohol