

What Causes Your Symptoms?

Your symptoms of burning pain, belching, sour taste in the mouth, and occasionally a sensation of a lump in the throat are produced by reflux of acid and digestive juices from the stomach into the esophagus.

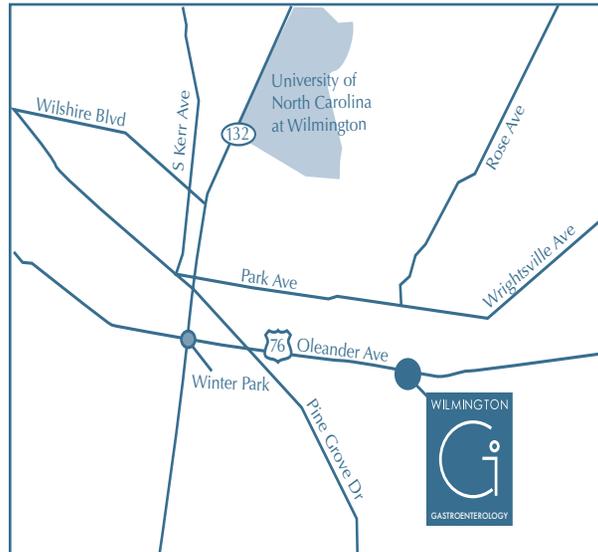
In some patients the valve at the bottom of the esophagus (that prevents food from re-entering the esophagus after it has passed into the stomach) does not work properly. This is referred to as a lower esophageal sphincter incompetence.

Some patients who have this disorder will have an accompanying hiatus hernia, although the hiatus hernia itself if not producing the symptoms. Reflux is due to increased pressure within the abdomen or due simply to gravity allowing acid to enter the esophagus and produce irritation.

The objective of therapy is to reverse all of the factors that lead to reflux of acid and digestive juices into the esophagus and to control symptoms.

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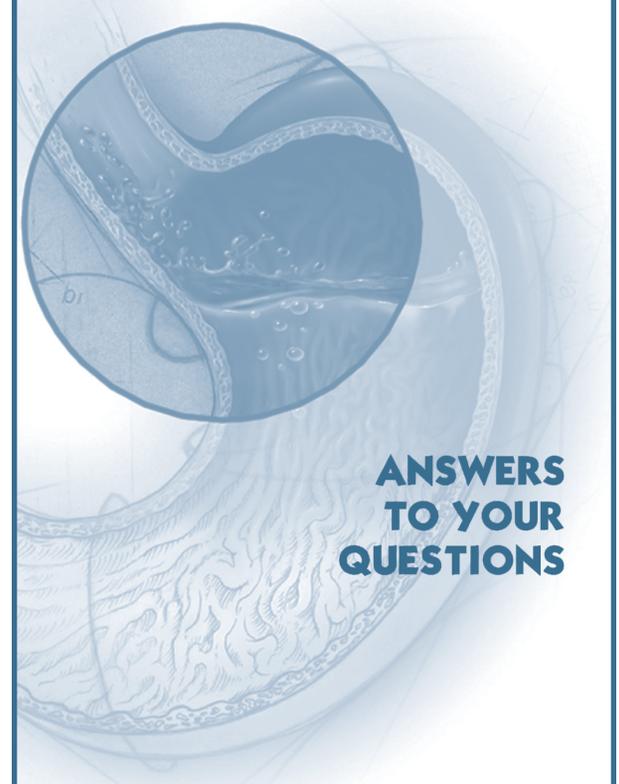


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SYMPTOMATIC REFLUX ESOPHAGITIS



**ANSWERS
TO YOUR
QUESTIONS**

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What Can You Do?

Elevate the head of your bed on blocks until it is approximately 6 to 8 inches higher than the foot of the bed.

Eat small meals that are high in protein and low in fat.

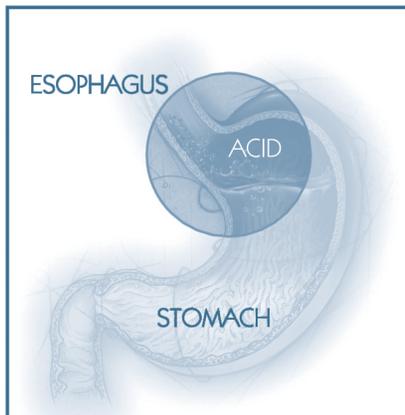
We suggest that you have a light breakfast, a light lunch, and a light evening meal.

Avoid eating snacks before going to bed at night because this stimulates the production of acid.

Avoid wearing tight clothing that would compress your abdomen and increase the pressure within.

Avoid doing heavy lifting and bending if possible.

If you are overweight, reduce your weight to ideal body weight for your height (guidelines available upon request). Reducing weight has a dramatic effect on reducing reflux symptoms.



Except for eating small, frequent meals, there are only a few limitations that must be imposed in your diet:

- Avoid caffeine or carbonated beverages
- Avoid alcoholic beverages
- Avoid any foods that you clearly associate with development of pain
- Avoid fried or fatty foods
- Avoid lying down for at least 2 hours after a meal
- Stop cigarette smoking

Consult your doctor about any other prescription medications you are taking and avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, or over the counter drugs containing aspirin.

What Results Can You Expect?

If you follow this regimen, your symptoms should be reduced.

If you do not follow this regimen, you are more likely to develop complications of REFLUX ESOPHAGITIS which include:

- Narrowing of the esophagus to the point that it may cause difficulty swallowing food
- Hemorrhage from the esophagus that could be severe in nature
- Asthma and recurrent pneumonia
- Cancer of the esophagus

Should you develop any evidence of these complications, consult your physician immediately.

Some patients do not respond to life-style adjustment and antacid use. Your doctor may prescribe medications to help reduce the amount of acid that is released from the stomach.

The endoscope is a small flexible tube that when passed through the patient's mouth allows the doctor to look at the lining of the esophagus, stomach and first part of the small intestine.

