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# Anti-reflux advice

**In some people stomach acid may leak out of the stomach and up into the gullet and throat. This can cause irritation and muscle spasm in the throat.**

Symptoms affecting the throat (laryngo-pharyngeal reflux - sometimes known as silent reflux) include coughing (especially at night), throat burning or soreness, throat clearing, excessive mucus, bad taste first thing in the morning, bad breath, sensation of a lump in the throat, sudden rush of saliva into the mouth, hoarse voice.

The following practical suggestions may help to neutralise the stomach acid, reduce the production of acid or prevent acid coming up the gullet.

1. Take an 'over the counter' antacid such as Gaviscon Advance (after meals and last thing at night). If symptoms persist or become worse talk with your GP about taking a 2 - 3 month course of PPI (eg omeprazole /lansoprazole) medication.
2. Changing your diet may help control symptoms. Avoid highly seasoned foods, citrus fruits, tomatoes, onions, peppers, crisps and fried foods. Foods such as olives, vegetable oil, nuts, pastries, chocolate and dairy products may also have a negative effect.
3. Alcohol, tobacco and coffee are irritants to the gullet and should be avoided. Alcohol and coffee also stimulate stomach acid secretions.
4. Avoid eating 3 - 4 hours before you go to bed.
5. Take your time when eating, chew food well. Eating little and often can be helpful.
6. Avoid strongly flavoured sweets, lozenges, chewing gum and breath fresheners.
7. Do not bend over or stoop any more than is absolutely necessary. This includes activities such as gardening and exercises requiring lifting and bending.
8. Being overweight may be a factor. If appropriate consider ways to lose weight.
9. Clothing that fits tightly across the mid section of the body should be avoided.

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10. Practise abdominal breathing when you are having symptoms. This means you concentrate on expanding gently around your middle as you breathe in. Avoid raising your shoulders and chest, and tightening around your waist.
11. Consider whether you are or have been under any stress. Are there ways of managing this differently or of getting some support?
12. For night-time relief, people sometimes find that sleeping with the head of the bed raised helps. Sleeping on two or three pillows placed under the mattress is one idea. You could try putting something solid, like wood or bricks under the legs of the bed, raising the head end around six inches. Sleep on your left side, not your right.

**Additional notes:**

If you have any questions regarding this information please contact the Speech & Language Therapy Team on **0151 604 7271** or email **wchc.salt@nhs.net**

If you would like this information in another format or language, please contact the Your Experience Team on freephone 0800 694 5530. Alternatively you can email [wcnt.yourexp@nhs.net](mailto:wcnt.yourexp@nhs.net)

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