

## Nutrition and Dietetics

# Managing heartburn

Heartburn is a burning feeling your chest. Heartburn is caused by stomach acid travelling up into your throat (oesophagus).

Heartburn is also called indigestion, gastro-oesophageal reflux, or dyspepsia.

## Symptoms of heartburn

The symptoms of heartburn are:

- a burning sensation or pain in middle of your chest
- belching
- nausea
- sense of bloated fullness

## Causes of heartburn

Heartburn happens when food and acid from the stomach pass back into the throat.

## How you can reduce heartburn yourself

Some simple lifestyle changes can help to reduce your heartburn symptoms.

This advice is only a guide. What works for you might be different for other people. You may find different strategies help to reduce your symptoms.



## Patient Information

### **Do:**

- ✓ take your anti-reflux medicines as prescribed by your doctor
  - you can also ask your pharmacist about over-the-counter medicines.
- ✓ eat small, frequent meals
- ✓ eat slowly at mealtimes - chew your food well.
- ✓ drink before or after meals – this prevents your stomach overfilling
- ✓ including high fibre foods in your diet
  - for more advice on fibre, ask for the leaflet “How to eat more fibre”
- ✓ try to drink 8 to 10 cups (1.5 to 2 litres) of fluid a day
- ✓ maintain a healthy weight for your height - try to lose weight if you're overweight.
- ✓ quit smoking
- ✓ reduce your alcohol intake - men and women should not exceed 14 units of alcohol a week

### **Don't:**

- × do not eat main meals close to bedtime or before lying down.
- × do not eat foods that trigger your symptoms - these could be:
  - fried or fatty foods
  - citrus/acidic foods
  - caffeinated drinks
  - carbonated drinks

You can try reintroducing the foods after a month to see if they cause symptoms.

## **More information**

For more information visit the Guts UK website:

<https://gutscharity.org.uk/>

## Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact the department on 024 7696 6161 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

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