

14 Tips to Manage Symptoms of GERD

Treatment of GERD includes lifestyle modifications, medical, endoscopic and surgical therapy. There are many lifestyle changes that you can do which can help in reducing the frequency and severity of your GERD-related symptoms, regardless if you are on some type of treatment.

They include the following:

1. Don't go to bed with a full stomach
2. Eat your last meal of the day three hours before lying down. This will give food time to digest and empty from your stomach.
3. Do not snack between your last meal and bedtime
4. When going to bed, avoid the right side, which anatomically is more associated with reflux
5. When in bed, turn off the light and go to sleep. Avoid reading, watching TV, surfing on the internet etc. Good sleep has been shown to suppress reflux.
6. Don't overeat. Decrease the size of your meals. Alternatively, eat 4-6 small meals during the day instead of 3 large meals.
7. Avoid tight-fitting garments.
8. Certain food and beverages are known to trigger or exacerbate GERD-related symptoms. Find out which ones affect you, and try to avoid them. They include fresh onion, coffee, alcohol, peppermint, fresh citrus juices, tomato juice, tomato-based products, carbonated beverages, chili pepper and chocolate.
9. Keep a food diary - By keeping a diary, you can identify which types of food or beverages trigger or worsen your symptoms.
10. Avoid spicy or high fat meals
11. Weight loss has been shown to be very effective in improving GERD-related symptoms
12. Quit smoking
13. Raise the head of your bed. Do not use pillows to elevate the upper part of your body. Either buy a bed wedge or elevate the head of the bed
14. Avoid exercising at least 2 hours after a meal