



For questions or emergency care, please contact us at 985-327-5905

Gastroesophageal Reflux Laryngitis/Laryngopharyngeal reflux (LPR)

What is gastroesophageal reflux?

Gastroesophageal reflux is a condition in which some of the acid in the stomach travels backward out of the stomach and into the esophagus and throat. Reflux is usually worse when we are sleeping, but it can occur at any time. When we sleep the valve between the stomach and esophagus relaxes and opens. This lets acid in the stomach move backward into the esophagus and throat. This acid is irritating to the throat and can result in laryngitis, a condition of inflamed and irritated vocal cords or larynx. The best way to control gastroesophageal reflux laryngitis is to control the reflux that causes it.

Common symptoms of the reflux that affect the throat include:

- Burning and sore throat
- Bad taste in mouth and bad breath
- Throat clearing
- Hoarseness, often worse in the morning
- More mucus in throat
- Chronic dry cough
- A frequent feeling of choking
- A feeling there is a lump stuck in the throat (globus)

What can be done to control reflux?

- Take the medicine prescribed. Do not stop taking this medicine without discussing this with your doctor. You may not see results for several weeks. This medication typically causes no side effects although some people may experience bloating.
- Adjust your diet:
 - Learn to eat more frequent, smaller meals during the day.
 - Do not eat within 3 hours before lying down and going to bed.
 - Avoid foods and beverages that increase stomach acid. These include alcohol, carbonated beverages, caffeine products, chocolate, tomatoes, citrus juices, and peppermint.
 - Avoid fatty food, spicy and fried foods, and foods high in acid content.
 - Cut down on dairy products in your diet.
 - Avoid starches and foods made with white flour. This includes pasta, white bread, crackers, chips, snack foods, potatoes, and white rice.
 - Drink 6 or more glasses of water each day. Each glass of water is equal to 8 ounces.
- Do not smoke or use tobacco products.
- Many people feel better if the head of bed is raised 6-8 inches. You can do this by putting some blocks under the head of your bed.
- Tight clothes may cause some reflux problems.
- Exercise regularly.
- Watch for stressful, tense moments. Stress can bother the reflux problem.
- Do not lift heavy items, exercise, or bend over after eating.
- If overweight, lose weight down to your ideal body weight.

Although it may seem like there are too many things to pay attention to, concentrate on the areas which need the most work, and add others if your symptoms continue to be problematic. This is a gradual process. The changes which occurred in your larynx took time to develop; it will take time to undo them.