

## ANTI-REFLUX INSTRUCTION SHEET

In some people, irritating acid stomach juices may leak out of the stomach and into the esophagus and throat. This causes irritation and muscle spasm in the throat. Some of the symptoms that people have from this include coughing, burning or soreness, throat clearing, excess mucous, bad tastes and a sensation of a lump in the throat.

The following instructions are designed to help neutralize the stomach, reduce the production of acid and prevent acid from coming up the esophagus. You should use as many of these instructions as needed to get relief. If these measures do not help, or if your symptoms get worse, you should let your doctor know about it.

1. Take an antacid in liquid form (Gelusil, Maalox or others of your choice - Tums may be OK) 30 - 40 minutes after meals and at bedtime. If symptoms are severe, take antacids every 1 1/2 or 2 hours between meals.
2. If you are overweight you should try to lose weight.
3. Diet restrictions help control symptoms. A bland diet divided into multiple small feedings is recommended. You should avoid highly seasoned food, fats, citrus, tomato, onion, pepper, commercial potato chips and fried foods. Other things that promote reflux include chocolate, nuts, pastries, olives and vegetable oil. Each meal should include protein for stability (e.g. meat, fish, eggs, chicken, cottage cheese). Care should be taken to chew food properly.
4. Alcohol, tobacco, and coffee are irritants to the esophagus and should be avoided. Alcohol and coffee also stimulate acid stomach secretions. Avoid all strongly flavored candies, lozenges, gums, breath fresheners, etc.
5. Do not eat for 3 or 4 hours before retiring.
6. For nighttime relief, sleep with the head of your bed elevated since symptoms are more likely to occur if you lie flat. The best way to achieve elevation is to place cinder blocks, wood, or bricks under the legs of the head of the bed. The desired elevation ranges from 4 to 8 inches, with 6 inches a customary average. If this is not practical, sleep on 2 or 3 pillows or a foam wedge. Sometimes sleeping on the right side prevents distressing attacks.
7. Clothing that fit tightly across the mid-section of the body should be avoided. Women should not wear a girdle. Men should not wear a belt, but should use suspenders instead. Use of "abdominal supporting belts" should be prohibited.
8. You should practice abdominal or diaphragmatic breathing when you are having symptoms. This means that you concentrate on pushing out the stomach with each breath instead of expanding the chest.
9. Do not bend or stoop any more than is absolutely necessary. This includes activities such as gardening and exercises requiring lifting or bending.
10. Maintaining a relaxed attitude in your activities helps to reduce symptoms.