

Laryngopharyngeal Reflux

Gastroesophageal Reflux (GER) is a very common problem affecting most people at least some of the time. Symptoms are caused when stomach contents, especially stomach acid, flow from the stomach into the esophagus. These symptoms can include: **“heartburn”, regurgitation, belching, chest tightness, and swallowing problems.**

Laryngopharyngeal Reflux (LPR) occurs when the stomach acid flows all the way out of the top of the esophagus and into the throat, the voicebox and the back of the nose. **It is very common to have only symptoms related to the throat, but never any heartburn** or other symptoms of GER.

Symptoms of LPR commonly include:

Hoarseness	Bad breath or bad taste in mouth
Throat irritation	Throat burning / soreness
Excessive mucous or phlegm	“lump in the throat”
Persistent choking or coughing	Post-nasal drip
Swallowing difficulty	Worsened asthma

TREATMENTS

Risk factors for LPR include dietary selection, weight, emotional stress, and certain medications. Ideal treatment may require substantial lifestyle modifications as well as new medications.

Lifestyle modifications include: **weight loss** (if possible), **avoiding large meals, avoiding meals within 2-3 hours of bedtime**, avoiding napping or lying after meals, and reducing stressors in life.

Dietary modifications are of critical importance, and are often just as effective at reducing symptoms as medication. **The following foods should be avoided:**

Coffee & tea	Spicy foods (Mexican and Thai)	Fried foods
Carbonated beverages	Fatty foods	
Citrus fruits and juices (oranges, grapefruits)	Chocolate	
Tomatoes and tomato-based products	Mints and throat lozenges	
Whole milk products (milk)	Alcoholic beverages	
	Tobacco products	

Your physician may also prescribe **acid-reducing medications**, both prescription and over-the-counter, that can help with symptoms. You must allow at least 4-6 weeks for these medications to take full effect.