Helicobacter Pylori Disease

Often patients with stomach or duodenal ulcers not caused by irritants, are infected with a germ. The germ is called helicobacter pylori (*H. pylori*). This bacterium lives on the surface of stomach and small bowel. It can cause redness, soreness and ulcers. Ulcers are a hole in the lining of your stomach or small bowel.

Blood and special breath tests can detect if you are infected with H. pylori. Tests can be done on samples taken from the stomach if you have endoscopy. After treatment you may have tests to prove you are cured. These can be done about a month after you finish the treatment or as your caregiver suggests.

Most infections can be cured with a combination of antibiotics. Antibiotics are medications which kill germs such as H. pylori. Anti-ulcer medicines which block stomach acid secretion may also be used. Treatment will be continued for the time your caregiver suggests. Call your caregiver if you need more information about H. pylori. Call also if your symptoms get worse during or after treatment.

You will not need a special diet. Avoid:

- **Smoking.**
- Aspirin.
- Ibuprofen.
- Other anti-inflammatory drugs.

Alcohol and spicy foods may also make your symptoms worse. The best advice is to avoid anything you find upsetting to your stomach.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU DEVELOP:

- Sharp, sudden, lasting stomach pain.
- Bloody vomit or vomit that looks like coffee grounds.
- Bloody or black stools.
- A light headed feeling, fainting, or become weak and sweaty.

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