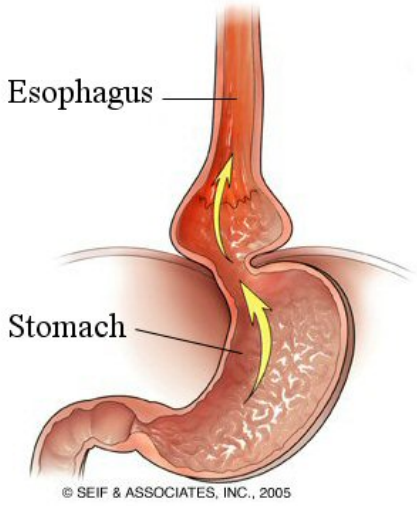
Esophagitis (Heartburn)

Esophagitis (*heartburn*) is a painful, burning sensation in the chest. It may feel worse in certain positions, such as lying down or bending over. It is caused by stomach acid backing up into the tube that carries food from the mouth down to the stomach (*lower esophagus*).



TREATMENT

There are a number of non-prescription medicines used to treat heartburn, including:

- Antacids.
- Acid reducers (also called H-2 blockers).
- Proton-pump inhibitors.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Raise the head of your bead by putting blocks under the legs.
- Eat 2-3 hours before going to bed.
- Stop smoking.
- Try to reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- **Do not** eat just a few very large meals. Instead, eat many smaller meals throughout the day.
- Try to identify foods and beverages that make your symptoms worse, and avoid these.
- Avoid tight clothing.
- **Do not** exercise right after eating.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU:

- Have severe chest pain that goes down your arm, or into your jaw or neck.
- Feel sweaty, dizzy, or lightheaded.
- Are short of breath.
- Throw up (*vomit*) blood.
- Have difficulty or pain with swallowing.
- Have bloody or black, tarry stools.
- Have bouts of heartburn more than three times a week for more than two weeks.

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