

Gastro Woes



Indigestion and Heartburn

Indigestion and Heartburn

Heartburn is a painful or burning feeling at the chest or throat area. It happens when the stomach is producing too much acid. Heartburn that happens often (2 or more days in a week) or does not go away may point to a more serious condition known as Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD).

Indigestion is the feeling of bloatedness or discomfort in the upper abdomen during or after a meal. It can happen after eating spicy food, drinking gassy drinks or eating too much. It can also be caused by medical conditions such as GERD, Peptic Ulcer Disease (PUD) and Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).

A person can experience symptoms of heartburn and indigestion separately or together. In most cases, both symptoms can be relieved by:

- avoiding large meals and eating too much
- avoiding lying down 2 hours after eating
- avoiding drinking coffee, gassy drinks and alcohol
- avoiding tight fitting clothing, belts and too much squatting or bending down
- getting enough rest and reducing your stress levels

Less serious symptoms may be treated with the following medicines:

Medicines	How it works	Examples
Antacids	Neutralises stomach acid	» Magnesium and aluminium salts *
Histamine-2 Receptor Antagonists	Lowers acid production in the stomach	» Cimetidine [^] » Ranitidine [^] » Famotidine [^]
Proton Pump Inhibitors		» Omeprazole [^]
Prokinetic Agent	Encourages contents of the stomach to be moved into the intestines	» Domperidone [^]

* Medicines that can be bought over-the-counter.
[^] Pharmacy-only medicines that can only be bought after consultation with a pharmacist.

Scan the QR to find out more about
- The management and treatment of heartburn and indigestion

