

Simply making minor lifestyle and dietary changes can greatly reduce the symptoms of GERD.

## **Weight loss**

Being overweight has clearly been shown to be associated with GERD, and those with a lower Body Mass Index (BMI) have less risk of symptoms. There is now research that shows losing weight can help reduce the symptoms of acid reflux.

## **Diet**

Diet appears to be a major part of controlling GERD symptoms. Most people with GERD know of foods that can provoke their reflux. The most common foods that people complain of include:

- Onions
- Tomatoes and tomato products
- Vinegars or foods cured in vinegar (pickles, relish)
- Spicy foods
- Acidic fruits and juices (orange, grapefruit, pineapple and lemon)
- Foods very high in sugar
- Whole milk products
- Fatty or greasy meats
- Fried or greasy foods
- Recipes that are very high in fat
- Alcohol
- Coffee
- Tea
- Carbonated beverages
- Peppermint
- Chocolate

## **Alcohol use**

Alcohol can slow the stomach from emptying properly. Minimizing alcohol intake can help reduce reflux symptoms.

## **Avoid eating before going to bed**

Eating before going to bed can aggravate reflux symptoms. To avoid reflux episodes don't eat or drink anything for at least 3 hours before going to sleep.

If you have to lie down after eating, elevating your head and upper torso can help to prevent GERD symptoms at night. Place bricks or a cinder block under the feet at the head of your bed. Using a foam wedge to elevate your head and shoulders can work also.

## Activity

Some exercises can increase pressure in the abdomen and aggravate reflux symptoms.

People with acid reflux should be careful when:

- Bending or stooping
- Lifting heavy objects (weight lifting)
- Sit-ups
- Isometric type exercises
- Running or jogging

Research has shown that riding a stationary bike has been shown to be a good exercise for those with GERD.

**[www.drgourmet.com/gerd](http://www.drgourmet.com/gerd) has more information  
as well as many reflux-friendly recipes.**