

What Causes Acid Reflux?

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by Dave Lavinsky

Though the root causes are often unclear, perhaps the most prevalent acid reflux cause is a poor diet. Acid reflux occurs during digestion, when the stomach churns up acid or refluxes it into the esophagus, causing a burning sensation in the chest or throat. So if you eat too many highly acidic foods like tomato sauces and/or fatty, fried foods, the stomach has to process an overabundance of acid. Too much acid can push back through a valve between the stomach and the esophagus called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES). Acid reflux culprits include but are not limited to tomato based sauces, fried and fatty foods, chocolate, alcohol, citrus fruits, peppers, and caffeinated beverages.

Along the same lines as diet, overeating also causes reflux. When you overeat, the stomach can't keep up with the demand to process all the acids. So food gets backed up, and digestive acids infiltrate the esophageal valve to cause that unpleasant burning feeling centered in the chest.

Also diet-related, another acid reflux cause is being overweight. There is a clear correlation between being overweight and a notable increase in the occurrence of acid reflux. Many believe this is because the extra weight puts more pressure on the stomach and esophagus. This pressure has been known to open the lower esophageal sphincter (esophagus valve), when the valve should be closed. This allows acid to escape into the esophagus.

Other factors that create a predisposition for acid reflux include smoking, use of alcohol, food allergies, certain medications, and lying down after meals. As you can tell, most of these factors can be overcome by practicing some behavioral modifications. In fact, in many cases of recurrent acid reflux, lifestyle changes are all that is necessary in preventing heartburn from becoming a chronic disease. Remember to consult a physician before embarking on any treatment strategy.

About the Author

Acid Reflux Info provides comprehensive information on the cause, symptoms, treatment, and diet associated with normal and infant acid reflux. Acid Reflux Info is the sister site of Pain Relief Web.