GASTROESOPHAGEAL REFLUX DISEASE (GERD) is one of the most common gastrointestinal diseases. GERD is caused by the flow of contents from the stomach upwards into the esophagus resulting in both symptoms and complications. The most common GERD symptoms are heartburn and regurgitation. HEARTBURN is a burning sensation in the chest behind the breastbone. REGURGITATION is a feeling of fluid or food coming up into the chest. Many people experience both symptoms; however, some patients can have one without the other.

**UP TO 20% OF THE U.S. POPULATION MAY HAVE GERD**

Heartburn is **COMMON** but **NOT TRIVIAL**

U.S. Economic Burden **$15 TO 20 BILLION ANNUALLY**

These may be GERD-related symptoms

- Asthma-like symptoms
- Bitter taste in mouth
- Chronic cough
- Dental erosions
- Hoarseness

**GERD FACTS**

- Symptoms are often experienced **after meals**
- Heartburn or symptoms happening **two or more times per week** can be troublesome
- Antacids can provide temporary symptom relief
- Over-the-counter or prescription medications may be needed
- Persistent symptoms may require further investigation such as endoscopy
- Surgery can be considered if you cannot tolerate medications or have persistent symptoms

**GERD TIPS**

- **2 TO 3 HOURS**
  - Avoid meals within 2–3 hours of bedtime
- **LOSE WEIGHT**
  - If you are overweight and can lose weight GERD symptoms can improve
- **STOP SMOKING**
- **HEADS UP**
  - Raise the head of your bed 6–8 inches
- **LEFT SIDE**
  - Sleep on your left side to ease nighttime heartburn

**MORE TIPS:**

- Wear loose fitting clothes
- Eliminate food triggers
- Take your medications as directed
- Ask your doctor which treatment option is right for you

**If left UNTREATED COMPLICATIONS may include:**

- Esophageal stricture
- Bleeding
- Barrett’s esophagus
- Esophageal cancer

**FOOD Triggers to AVOID**

- Carbonated beverages
- Chocolate
- Citrus drinks
- Coffee
- Fatty or spicy foods
- Peppermint
- Tomato products

**Learn More:** Scan QR code or visit: bit.ly/acg-gerd-info

**Find a gastroenterologist near you:** gi.org/FindaGI