

Gastroesophageal Reflux (GERD)

Weight (Kg):

What is reflux?

Reflux (also called gastro-esophageal reflux or GERD or regurgitation) is the effortless spitting up of stomach contents, usually milk, often with a burp. It usually happens during or shortly after feedings. It is harmless, as long as your infant doesn't spit up large amounts that interfere with normal weight gain. Most infants with reflux are happy and healthy even though they spit up.

How common is reflux?

Almost all babies reflux or spit-up, it is a matter of which babies experience discomfort with it.

What is it caused by?

Poor formation of the ring of muscle at the top of the stomach that usually acts as a valve to keep stomach contents down causes reflux. This muscle gets stronger and closes better as your baby gets older.

How long will it last?

Reflux usually improves with age and usually resolves by about 12 months. This is probably because your child is old enough to sit up and is eating solid foods by then.

What should I do?

1. Feed smaller amounts and burp more regularly. If the stomach is filled to capacity with milk or gas, reflux is more likely. Give your baby smaller amounts (1 ounce less than usual) more frequently (so the daily total remains the same).
2. Your baby should be in an upright, rather than flat, position during feeding. This helps the milk stay in the stomach.
3. Avoid pressure on your baby's abdomen (tummy). Avoid tight diapers and clothing. Don't handle your baby too vigorously right after feeding.
4. Keep your baby upright after meals. Use a front-pack, backpack or swing for ~30 minutes after a meal. Keep him/her from getting scrunched up in an infant seat by putting a pad under his/her buttocks.
5. Use a proper sleep position. Infants should sleep on their backs to reduce risk of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome). Elevate the head of the bed by placing a thick book under the mattress or legs of the bassonette. Do not use pillows or blankets in the crib.

Royal University Hospital
Children's Emergency Department

Affix patient label here

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Call your Doctor during office hours if:

1. Your baby doesn't seem to improve with this approach.
2. Your baby does not gain weight normally.
3. You have other questions or concerns.

Call your Doctor immediately or go to an Emergency Department if:

1. Your baby vomits/spits up blood or dark green liquid (bile).
2. Your baby turns blue with choking, coughs too much, or develops any other worrisome breathing problems.
3. Reflux or vomiting is excessive, especially if associated with fever or diarrhea or drowsiness.

Some of these problems may be caused by other disorders and your doctor will need to talk to you, examine your child and if appropriate, order tests.

If you have other questions or concerns call your doctors office or HealthLine at:
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