



Laryngo-pharyngeal Reflux / Silent Reflux Patient Information Sheet

This leaflet should help you understand the condition diagnosed by your doctor including:

- what it is
- Why it happens
- Symptoms
- Prevention and treatment.

What causes LPR?

You have been diagnosed with a common condition known as:
“**Laryngopharyngeal reflux**” or “**Silent reflux**”

Everyone has juices in the stomach which are acidic and digest and break down food. At the top of the stomach there is a muscular valve which closes to prevent food and stomach juices escaping upwards into the upper food passages

If this muscular valve does not work very well stomach juices can leak backwards into the food pipe a few centimetres and this can cause reflux or indigestion. This frequently causes a burning sensation in the chest or behind the breast bone called heartburn.

In your condition however the stomach juices travel always up the food pipe to the back of your throat therefore it can affect your voice box and the linings surrounding this area.

The common symptoms include

- Hoarseness or weakness of the voice
- Cough with tickling or irritation.
- So, dry throat
- Too much mucus or phlegm in the throat
- A nasty taste in your mouth
- Difficulty swallowing, especially tablets
- Throat clearing
- Feeling something is stuck in your throat

- Choking episodes at night

Some patients will also suffer from heartburn or indigestion in many patients only suffer with a throat symptoms and do not connect these with a stomach acid problem

How can this be prevented or treated?

Being careful about eating and drinking is essential.

- Eat small regular meals,
- Avoid fatty foods
- Reduce the amount of alcohol you drink especially white wine and spirits
- Reduce your caffeine intake
- Avoid fruit juices and fizzy drinks
- Chewing tooth whitening gum can be helpful as this contains bicarbonate which helps neutralise stomach acid.

General health measures:

- Stop smoking,
- If you are overweight try to lose some weight, sometimes even a small reduction in weight has a big change in reflux symptoms.
- Avoid eating late at night and you should ideally eat three hours before going to bed.

Caring for your voice:

- Avoid shouting singing Whispering or talking over background noise trying to
- limit your use of the phone and use text or email instead
- Try to drink 2 L of liquid every day they do not contain caffeine or alcohol
- Use steam inhalation is Twice-A-Day

Medical treatment:

This will usually consist of medication to reduce the amount of acid your stomach produces and also medication is to form a protective layer over the affected area.

How long will I need treatment for?

Most people will recommend high dose, twice daily treatment for 3 months and if you find that your symptoms persist after this time you probably should return to your doctor. Do not give up with treatment too early, (before the 3 months) as the acid damaged caused can take some time to resolve and heal.