

# Food Fact - Management of Acid Reflux, Oesophagitis, Heartburn and Hiatus Hernia

## Acid Reflux

Acid reflux occurs when the digestive juices rise into the oesophagus (gullet) from the stomach.

## Heartburn

Heartburn is a burning discomfort felt behind the breastbone, often rising from the stomach to the throat. When this happens a lot, the oesophagus becomes inflamed, this is called oesophagitis.

## Hiatus Hernia

A hiatus hernia occurs when part of the stomach rises through the hole (hiatus) in the diaphragm through which the oesophagus (gullet) passes.

**Sometimes altering how and what you eat can help .**

**Foods most commonly linked with acid reflux and heartburn include:**

- Fried foods
- Smoked and salted fish
- Highly seasoned and spicy dishes, e.g. chilli con carne, curry, soups like mulligatawny or oxtail
- Vegetables – garlic, onion and peppers
- Pickles, vinegar, mustard, pepper, spices
- Skins, pips and seeds of fruit
- Dried fruit and nuts
- Strong cheese, cooked 'stringy' cheese
- Tough and strongly flavoured meats and sausages
- Strong tea or coffee - especially 'stewed' varieties
- Alcohol

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## Dietary advice to relieve symptoms

- Eat small frequent meals
- Do not miss meals or go for long periods without food
- Eat slowly and chew your food well
- Sit (upright) at the table when eating
- Take drinks after meals rather than with them
- Avoid eating or drinking late at night
- Avoid eating foods of extreme temperature, hot or cold
- Avoid eating foods which you know cause you symptoms
- Lose weight if you are overweight - ask your Doctor or Practice Nurse for advice

**Talk to your Dietitian to make sure your diet is nutritionally adequate if you are avoiding certain foods for long periods.**

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