

Spit Happens!! (GERD info)

Symptoms of Spitting Up (GER)

- Smaller amounts often occur with burping (“wet burps”)
- Larger amounts can occur after overfeeding
- Most often seen during or shortly after feedings
- Occurs mainly in children under 1 year of age
- Begins in the first weeks of life
- Caution: Normal reflux does not cause any crying
- You’ve been told by a doctor your baby has reflux
- Onset early in life (85% by 7 days of life)
- Present for several days or weeks
- No pain or crying during reflux
- No effort with spitting up
- No diarrhea
- Your baby acts hungry, looks well and acts happy.

Cause

- Poor closure of the muscles at the upper end of the stomach (weak “valve”)
- Main trigger: overfeeding of formula or breastmilk
- More than half of all infants have occasional spitting up (“happy spitters”)

Complications of Spitting Up

These problems occur in less than 1% of infants (GERD):

- Choking on spit up milk
- Heartburn from acid on lower esophagus. Infants with this condition cry numerous times per day. They also act very unhappy when they are not crying. They are in almost constant discomfort.
- Poor Weight Gain

Reflux Versus Vomiting: How to Tell

- During the first month of life, newborns with true vomiting need to be seen quickly. The causes of vomiting in this age group can be serious. Therefore, it's important to tell the difference between reflux and true vomiting.

Treatment:

- Avoid overfeeding your baby.
 - Feed Smaller Amounts:
 - Skip this advice if age less than 1 month or not gaining weight well.
 - Bottled Babies. Give smaller amounts per feeding (1 ounce or 30 ml less than you have been). Keep the total feeding time to less than 20 minutes. Reason: Overfeeding or completely filling the stomach always makes spitting up worse.
 - Breastfed Babies. If you have a good milk supply, try nursing on 1 side per feeding. Pump the other side. Switch sides you start on at each feeding.
 - Longer Time Between Feedings:
 - Formula. Wait at least 2½ hours between feedings.
 - Breastmilk. Wait at least 2 hours between feedings.
 - Reason: It takes that long for the stomach to empty itself. Don't add more milk to a full stomach.
- Keep your baby away from tobacco and other chemical smoke.
- Keep your infant upright and calm for 20-30 minutes after each feed; preferably by holding them. Avoid placing your infant in a car seat or swing during this time as it may increase pressure on their belly and cause more symptoms of reflux.
 - Upright Position:
 - After meals, try to hold your baby in the upright (vertical) position.
 - Use a front-pack, backpack, or swing for 30 to 60 minutes after feedings.
 - Decrease the time in a sitting position (such as infant seats).
 - After 6 months of age, a jumpy seat is helpful. The newer ones are stable.
 - During breast or bottle feeds, hold your baby at a slant. Try to keep your baby's head higher than the stomach.
 - Burping:
 - Burping is less important than giving smaller feedings. You can burp your baby 2 or 3 times during each feeding.
 - Do it when he pauses and looks around. Don't interrupt his feeding rhythm in order to burp him.
 - Burp each time for less than a minute. Stop even if no burp occurs. Some babies don't need to burp.
- Frequent sucking on a pacifier can pump the stomach up with swallowed air.
 - So can sucking on a bottle with too small a nipple hole.
 - The formula should drip 1 drop per second when held upside down. If it doesn't, the nipple hole may be clogged. Clean the nipple better. You can also make the nipple hole slightly bigger.

Loose Diapers:

- Do not put the diaper on too tight. It puts added pressure on the stomach.
- Don't put pressure on the stomach right after meals.
- Also, do not play too hard with your baby during this time.

- Place your baby on their back during sleep in an infant crib without loose blankets, pillows, toys, and care supplies. Your infant should always sleep alone and not in bed with you.

!!Never place your infant on their stomach or side for sleep because of the increased risk of death from SIDS!!

Add Rice Cereal to Formula:

- If your baby still spits up large amounts, try thickening the formula. Mix it with oat, barley or quinoa cereal or powdered beans or lentils. (1/4-1/2 tsp per 2 oz)
 - You may also need to make the nipple opening larger.
- If your infant does not improve, your doctor may prescribe an acid-blocking medication.

*Call your doctor if your infant has any of the following:

- Bloody stools or severe diarrhea
- Bloody vomit
- Recurrent pneumonia or respiratory infections
- Weight loss or slow weight gain
- Prolonged crying that cannot be explained
- Refusal to drink or eat for a prolonged period
- Forceful vomiting followed by desire to eat again in an infant less than 3 months old
- Drowsiness, not responding normally to things around them