

**Accident & Emergency
Department**



Patient Information

Heartburn

Heartburn

This is not a disease but a symptom of burning discomfort in your chest, usually associated with an acid taste in the mouth. It is also referred to as indigestion and is associated with oily meals.

It occurs when the valves located at the junction of the stomach and the oesophagus does not close properly causing the reflux of acid contents of the stomach back up the oesophagus or gullet and sometimes into the throat.

Factors that bring it on are particular foods such as cabbage, onions, cucumber, curries, pastries or fruit cake; certain drinks such as wine, coffee beer or sodas; eating too fast; rich or big meals ; chewing gum long and hard; stress and

anxiety; pregnancy; old age; obesity and certain drugs such as aspirin.

Prevention is the key. Eat in slow and relaxed manner while sitting down avoid foods that burn; eat small or moderate meals; squat rather than bend; keep your bowel movements, regular; avoid stress; relax for half an hour after each meal and reduce you intake of alcohol.

Learn what brings on your heartburn and try to avoid it. Take antacids when you feel heartburn coming on and before bed at night; make sure you get regular exercise to avoid overweight. Visit your family doctor or local clinic if heartburn persists despite correct management.

You are now on your way to good health.