



Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) – Low Risk

Gastroesophageal Reflux (GERD) is what happens when the lower esophageal sphincter (LES) becomes weak or relaxes when it shouldn't, and stomach contents come back up into your esophagus. The stomach acid that touches the lining of your esophagus can cause heartburn, also called indigestion. It can also be called acid reflux or acid regurgitation. GERD affects about 20 % of the U.S. Population. Individuals with severe GERD have poorly controlled symptoms on prescription medications.

Risks that contribute to Moderate Risk GERD include but are not limited to:

- Increased pressure on your abdomen from being overweight, obese, or pregnant
- Eating large and / or high fat meals
- Behaviors around eating such as gagging, over eating, food stuffing, and food refusal
- Certain medicines: Antihistamines; Painkillers; Sedatives; Antidepressants
- Smoking
- Use of alcohol

Symptoms of Mild GERD may include but are not limited to:

- An uncomfortable feeling of burning, warmth and / or heat in the esophagus
- Pain just behind the breastbone or upper abdomen
- Reflux or regurgitation of food

Recommendations: Awareness of risk is important. Be alert to changes that might trigger GERD and report changes. You should consider including ways to prevent GERD in the individuals care plan such as:

- Following heartburn prevention techniques may help prevent symptoms
- Maintaining a healthy body weight may help prevent the condition
- Understand what is causing the disease and try to prevent the progression
- Eat smaller, less fatty meals - Continuing to eat heavy meals rich in fat will likely increase the damage to his sphincter

References:

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Please note: this information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor or nP. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health providers with any questions about your medical condition.