

## Anti-reflux Precautions

Acid reflux occurs when the muscle at the lower esophagus (LES) allows acids to move upward from the stomach into the esophagus. The symptoms include heartburn, chest discomfort, bitter taste, hoarse voice, and others. This is called Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD). This diet is designed to help reduce acid reflux.

- \* Stop smoking!
- \* Avoid any foods that you know will cause you to have heartburn.
- \* Avoid coffee, alcohol, chocolate, peppermint, and fatty foods as much as possible.
- \* Avoid bending or stooping after eating.
- \* Avoid clothing that fits tightly across the mid-section of the body.
- \* Consider eating smaller more frequent meals during the day.
- \* Avoid eating within three hours of your bedtime.
- \* Lose weight if you are overweight.
- \* Take any medication as prescribed by your physician.

For occasional heartburn (less than once a week), or heartburn despite your medication, use 1–2 chewable Pepcid Complete as needed, or 2 tablespoons of an antacid, such as Maalox or Mylanta. If you are a patient with renal problems use Amphogel or Alternagel instead of above antacids.

If symptoms continue despite the advice above: Use blocks under the top bedposts to elevate the head of your bed 6–8 inches. You may also buy commercially available wedges to place under your mattress.

Contact our office if your symptoms worsen despite trying the suggestions above, if there is no significant improvement within 4 weeks, or if you continue to have reflux symptoms more than once a week.