



Sjögren's India

For Living Well with Sjögren's syndrome

Patient Education Sheetⁱ

Symptoms and management of Acid Reflux

Many patients with Sjögren's suffer from Gastro Esophageal Reflux Disease (GERD), but the exact cause remains unknown. This can cause a wide variety of symptoms that can be mistaken for other conditions. Symptoms of GERD may include:

- Persistent heartburn and/or regurgitation of acid,
- Stomach pain,
- Difficulty swallowing, sensation of having a lump in the throat, frequent throat clearing
- Hoarseness or voice change, throat pain, sore throat,
- Chronic cough (especially at night time or upon awakening).

Tips for combating gastroesophageal reflux in the throat:

- **Avoid lying flat while sleeping** - Elevate the head of your bed using blocks or by placing a Styrofoam wedge under the mattress. Do not rely on pillows as these may only raise the head but not the esophagus.
- **At mealtime, eat smaller quantities** - Eat frequent small meals rather than one large meal.
- **Avoid bedtime snacks** - Eat meals at least three-four hours before you go to sleep.
- **Lose excess weight**
- **Avoid spicy, acidic or fatty foods** - include citrus fruits or juices, tomato-based products, peppermint, & dark chocolate.
- **Limit intake of caffeine** - including coffee, tea, and colas.
- **Stop smoking**
- **Don't exercise within one-two hours after eating**
- **Promote salivary flow** by chewing sugar free gum, sucking on sugar free lozenges
- **Consult your doctor** if you have heartburn or take antacids more than three times per week. A variety of prescription medications can help but should only be taken with medical supervision.

For more information on Sjögren's syndrome

- [Visit www.sjogrenindia.org](http://www.sjogrenindia.org)
- [e-mail: sspatientgroup.india@gmail.com](mailto:sspatientgroup.india@gmail.com)
- [WhatsApp: +918200749362](https://www.whatsapp.com/channel/0029va6318200749362)

ⁱ Adapted from the Sjögren's Foundation's Patient Education Sheet – Reflux and your throat
Source: <https://www.sjogrens.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Reflux%20and%20Your%20Throat%20Patient%20Education%20Sheet.pdf>