

Indigestion

Indigestion is a symptom that can be associated with many disorders. It is a vague term used to describe any discomfort in the gastrointestinal tract. Some causes of indigestion are:

- Overeating
- Eating too rapidly
- Swallowing air
- Alcohol
- Emotional upset or anxiety
- Excess stomach acid
- Intolerance to certain foods or drugs

Some advice for handling indigestion:

Eat slowly, at regular times (don't skip meals), and in a relaxed atmosphere.

Avoid excessive amounts of caffeine-containing beverages and alcohol.

Use common sense. Avoid foods you know give you indigestion. What causes indigestion in someone else may not necessarily result in indigestion for you. Determine your own tolerance to foods.

Heartburn has nothing to do with heart. Rather it is the regurgitation of stomach acid into the lower esophagus. Some suggestions for this condition include:

- Eliminate fried foods
- Avoid alcohol, peppermint, spearmint
- Avoid strong coffee and/or tea and chocolate if not well tolerated
- Avoid citrus juices, tomatoes or spicy foods if they cause burning and irritation.

Other steps which may relieve symptoms include:

- Do not lie down for at least two hours after eating meals.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Reduce weight, if overweight.
- Drink most fluids between meals, allowing small amounts with meals.
- Avoid smoking following meals

If indigestion occurs frequently, the cause should be identified. Antacids may give temporary relief but will not cure the underlying cause. See your physician or nurse practitioner if you are often bothered by indigestion.

University of Connecticut - Student Health Services

Student Health Services Phone: 860-486-4700
234 Glenbrook Road Fax: 860-486-5300
Unit 2011
Storrs, CT 06269-2011

© The University of Connecticut Student Health Services, Nursing Service.
Division of Student Affairs 2008