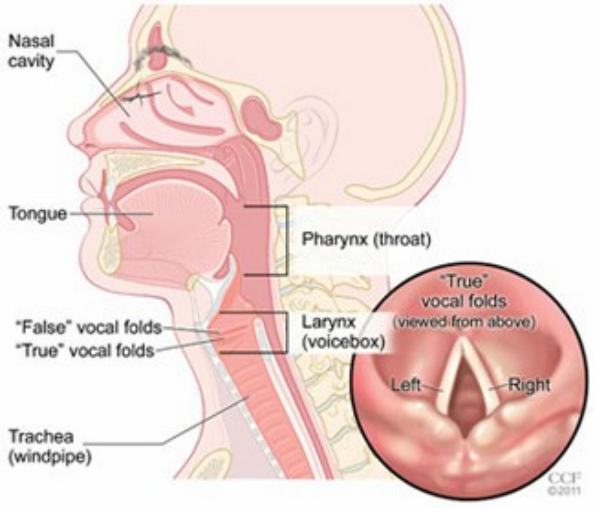
ENT Associates

Making sense of your family's hearing, sinus and throat problems

Laryngopharyngeal Reflux (LPR)

Normally when we swallow, food and liquid travel down our esophagus (food tube) and enter the stomach through a valve that opens to allow food and liquid into the stomach for digestion by stomach acid. Sometimes the valve opens inappropriately and allows stomach acid to "back up" or reflux into the esophagus. When this happens, we may experience heartburn. However, other times, a small amount of acid may reflux all the way up into the voice box (larynx) or throat (pharynx). The larynx and pharynx are much more sensitive to injury from stomach acid than the esophagus. Although we can have both heartburn and LPR, they are separate conditions. Most people who have LPR do not have heartburn.



What are the symptoms of LPR?

- Hoarse or scratchy voice (either chronic or intermittent)
- Ear pain
- Post-nasal drip
- Frequent throat clearing
- Lump-in-the-throat sensation
- Thick phlegm in the throat
- Cough
- Sour or bitter taste in the mouth
- Difficult or painful swallowing

What can I do to help relieve my symptoms?

To relieve LPR symptoms consider the following:

Medication:

- If your doctor has prescribed medication, please *take it as prescribed*. Proton pump inhibitors work best when taken 30 to 60 minutes prior to main meals to prepare the stomach before the food enters.
- Do not suddenly discontinue anti-reflux medications once started, as symptoms of throat irritation or heartburn can worsen. It's known as the "Rebound Effect."

Diet Changes:

- *Increase intake of water* – consider increasing your intake of alkaline water with each meal to neutralize acid irritation.
- *Limit your intake of caffeine* containing products including coffee, tea, soda, and chocolate. Caffeine has a drying effect on the lining of the stomach and provokes reflux.
- *Limit your intake of alcohol* - alcohol, like caffeine, has a drying effect on the stomach.
- *Reduce fat intake* – fatty or fried foods stay in the stomach longer and lead to more acid reflux.
- *Avoid "trigger foods* – you may already know which foods trigger indigestion…avoid them! Particularly foods that are spicy or acidic (like tomatoes, citrus fruit, and fruit juice.)
- *Eat less* – big meals put pressure on your stomach and create more acid.
- *Reduce your weight, if needed* - Excessive weight puts pressure on the stomach and will contribute to heartburn and LPR.
- *Incorporate dietary supplements* — As long as there are no contraindications, you should try to supplement your diet with the following to avoid some of the possible side effects of proton pump inhibitors: **Calcium citrate** (1000 to 1200mg), **Vitamin D** (5000 IU), **Magnesium** (500mg), **Vitamin B12** (500 to 1000mcg) and a **Priobiotic**.

(continued on back)

Lifestyle modifications:

- *Stop smoking*. Smoking is known to increase symptoms of LPR.
- *Wait to lie down*. To keep acid from backing up, wait at least 3 hours before lying down after eating (this includes bedtime snacks!)
- *Avoid wearing tight clothes or tight belts* that may put pressure on your stomach.
- *Raise the head of your bed* about 6 inches if you have nighttime symptoms of reflux.

SCAN ME

For office address and contact information:

Clearwater	Facial Aesthetics Center	St. Petersburg
Countryside	Largo	Tampa (Westchase)
Dunedin	Spring Hill	Trinity