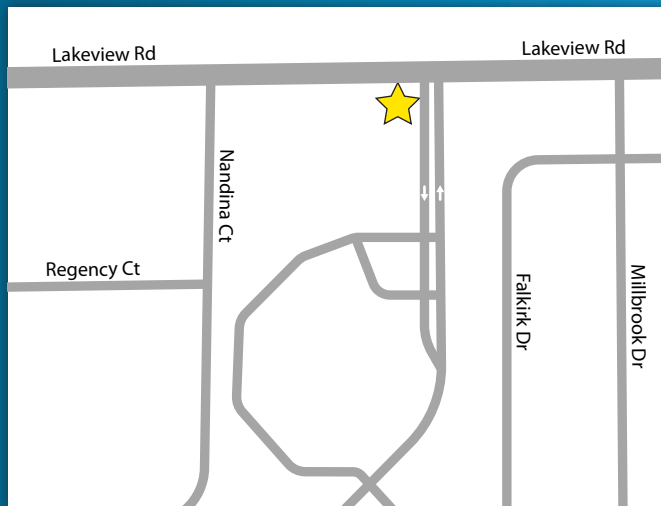


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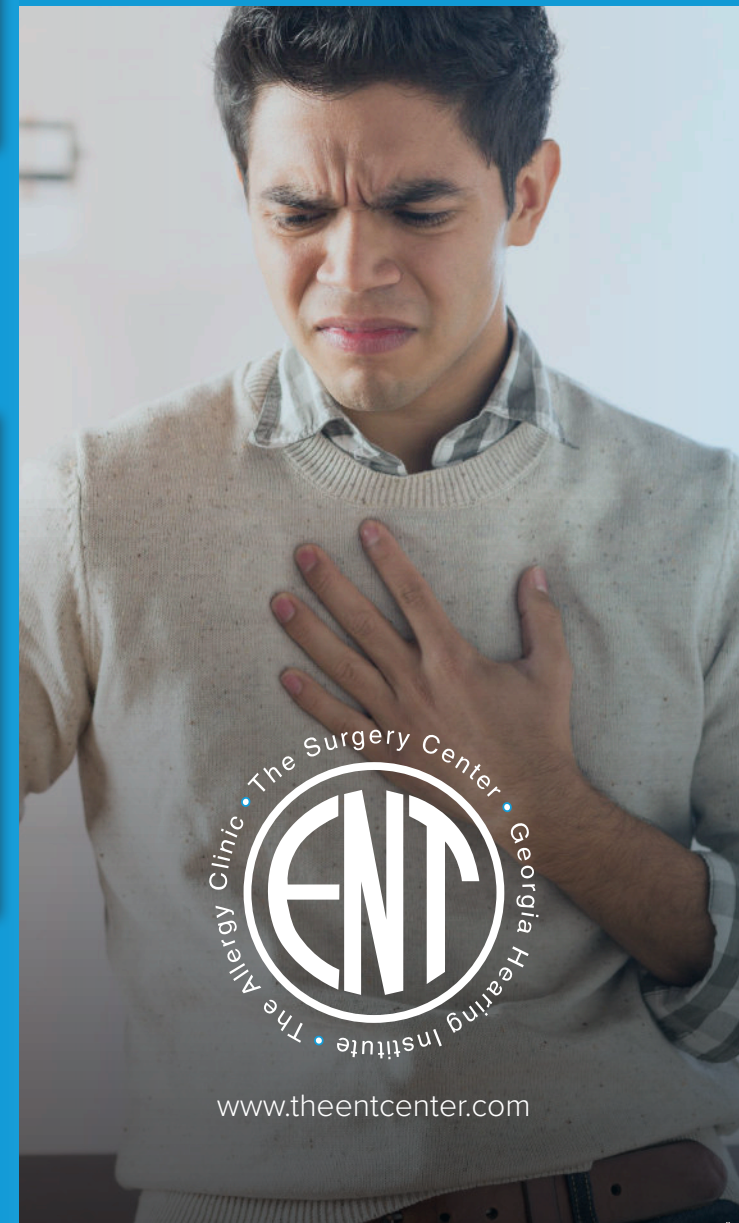
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The ENT Center of
Central Georgia

Our Doctors Explain:
ACID REFLUX



About the ENT Center of Central Georgia

The ENT Center of Central Georgia brings together the very best physicians and support staff dedicated to providing you an exceptional patient experience. In our pursuit to provide excellence in medical treatment, we listen to our patients and focus on their symptoms. We develop individualized treatment plans based on your unique needs and treat you like we would a family member. Whether you have hearing problems, allergies, dizziness, sinus infections, snoring, or any other ear, nose, and throat related problem, we can help.

For more information, contact one of the elite health care professionals at The ENT Center of Central Georgia today: 1-800-253-8953



www.theentcenter.com



What Is Acid Reflux?

Acid reflux, commonly referred to as just reflux, can affect your esophagus and larynx (throat). It occurs when stomach contents flow back into the food pipe (esophagus). Reflux is typically caused by a failure of the muscle valve (called the lower esophageal sphincter) between the stomach and the esophagus to close properly. This allows the acid from the stomach to flow into the esophagus and the throat, damaging the lining.

Some risk factors that can exacerbate reflux are:

- Eating large meals
- Eating certain foods (acidic foods, spicy foods, fatty foods, chocolate, mint, garlic, onions, etc.)
- Drinking alcohol, caffeine or carbonated liquids
- Eating within two hours of bedtime/lying flat
- Smoking
- Obesity
- Pregnancy



What Are the Symptoms of Acid Reflux?

The stomach lining is made to tolerate the acid that breaks down your food, but the tissues in the esophagus and larynx (throat) are not. Acid in these areas can cause a variety of symptoms.

Heartburn is the most common symptom associated with reflux, but not everyone who has acid reflux has heartburn. The type of reflux that reaches and affects the throat is called laryngopharyngeal reflux, or LPR. Often, patients with LPR do not have heartburn. The most common symptoms of LPR are hoarseness, frequent throat clearing, a nonproductive cough, difficulty swallowing, the feeling of a lump or something stuck in your throat, and the feeling of too much mucous in the throat.

How Is Acid Reflux Diagnosed?

Your doctor will ask questions about your medical history and symptoms. Your doctor may also need to look in your throat at your voice box. They do this by passing a long, thin tube called an endoscope through your nose and into your throat to see the tissues affected by reflux. Your doctor can also order other diagnostic tests to evaluate for reflux, such as a swallow study.



How Is Acid Reflux Treated?

An effective way to treat acid reflux is with dietary changes, avoiding the triggers that can cause or worsen reflux. If you smoke, quitting can help with reflux symptoms. Also, losing weight if you are obese can be helpful.

Your doctor will likely start you on medication to reduce the acid. The goal with medication is typically to leave you on it long enough to heal the tissues in your throat and esophagus but then to have you manage the reflux in the long term with dietary and lifestyle changes.

If your symptoms are not controlled after treatment, your doctor may refer you to other specialists.