



Name of Child: _____ Date: _____

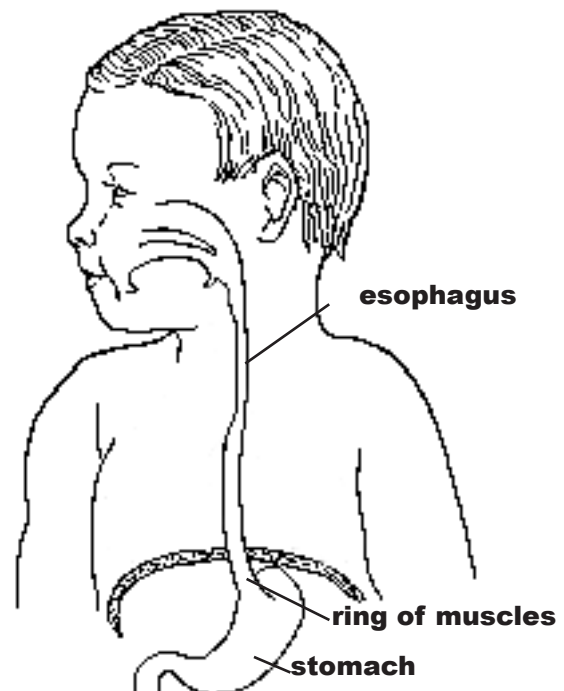
GER or Gastroesophageal Reflux in Babies

What is GER?

GER or gastroesophageal reflux is when food in the stomach sloshes back up into the throat or in the tube between the stomach and the throat (the esophagus). A ring of muscles (sphincter) separates the top of the stomach from the esophagus. When this ring doesn't close tightly, stomach contents can leak back up.

Food mixes with acid in the stomach. When this acid comes up, it may irritate the child's esophagus. It feels like it is burning.

If a baby is placed flat after eating, it makes it even easier for the food to come back up into the throat. Babies with GER may spit up a lot. If the food reaches the baby's airway, the baby may cough, choke, have trouble breathing, or get lung infections.



GER or gastroesophageal reflux is when food in the stomach sloshes back up into the throat or between the stomach and the throat.

Does this affect my baby's eating?

Babies with GER may notice that after they eat, they feel the burning of the food coming back up. Some babies may not want to eat, or stop eating after they take in only a little food. Some babies may cry, become irritable, or let you know in other ways that they are not comfortable. They may have trouble gaining weight.

How do you know if my baby has GER?

Babies with GER may have poor weight gain. Tests will show if your baby has GER. Your baby may have one or several of these tests. One test measures acid in the baby's esophagus, using a pH probe. In another test, the doctor may look down your baby's esophagus (endoscopy).

How is GER treated?

Most babies with GER outgrow it by the end of their first year of life.

Until the baby outgrows GER, it can be treated with positioning, thickened food, and if necessary, medicine.

yes no Keep your baby upright

Babies normally lie down a lot. This makes it easy for the stomach contents to flow up. When babies with GER start to roll over and crawl, they may spit up even more.

If you can keep your baby upright, instead of lying flat, it may help keep the food from sloshing up. If your baby is very young, or very active, this may be hard to do. But it is the best way to keep the food down.

It is best to keep a baby with GER up at a



Hold your baby up straight with towel rolls, stuffed toys, or a piece of foam.

30-degree angle or more all the time. You can do this by:

- Put a pillow on the changing table to hold your baby up while you change diapers.
- Put a piece of foam, cut into a wedge at a 30-degree angle, under the mattress in your baby's bed.
- Put some books under one end of the baby's mattress.
- Use a Danny Sling to hold your baby up on the tilted mattress while he or she sleeps. They come in different sizes, depending on your baby's weight.

One place you can buy a Danny sling:

Bird & Cronin, Inc.

1-800-328-1095

E-mail: sales@birdcronin.com

yes no **Meals**

If you feed your baby small meals, more often in the day, there will be less food in the stomach to slosh back up. Feed your baby every 2 or 3 hours. Do not overfeed your baby.

Keep lots of burp cloths around. Cover your carpets to protect them from your baby's spit-up.

yes no **Thicken Formula**

Sometimes thicker formula or milk may not come up so easily.

To thicken formula, add 1 tablespoon of dried baby rice cereal to each 2 ounces of formula.

The hole in the bottle's nipple needs to be bigger to let this thickened formula through. You may make a small crosscut in the nipple, or you may buy crosscut juice nipples.

Make sure the nipple hole is just the right size for your baby.

— If the flow is too slow, your baby will take too long to suck the formula and get fussy. Make the hole bigger.

— If the flow is too fast, your baby will choke, cough, or gag. Use another nipple with a smaller hole.

You may still breast feed your baby.

yes no **Medicine**

Some children may need medicine to control the GER.

name of medicine: metoclopramide ranitidine cimetidine

how much to give: _____

when to give it: _____

Be patient

GER may be worse some days than others, no matter what you do. Be patient. Talk to your baby's doctor about how your baby is doing. Work with the doctor to find the best ways to help your baby.

Now that you have read this:

Tell your nurse or doctor what you will do to help your baby not spit up so much. (Check when done.)

If you want to learn more contact the
Pediatric/Adolescent Gastroesophageal Reflux Association
www.reflux.org



If you have any questions or concerns,
 call your child's doctor or call _____

If you want to know more about child health and illness,
visit our library at The Emily Center at Phoenix Children's Hospital
1919 East Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-546-1400
866-933-6459
www.phoenixchildrens.com

Disclaimer

The information provided at this site is intended to be general information, and is provided for educational purposes only. It is not intended to take the place of examination, treatment, or consultation with a physician. Phoenix Children's Hospital urges you to contact your physician with any questions you may have about a medical condition.

Thursday, May 8, 2008 • DRAFT to family review
#336 • Written by Fran London, MS, RN • Illustrated by Dennis Swain



The Emily Center

GER or Gastroesophageal Reflux in Babies

Diagnosis/Disease/Illness
Si usted desea esta información en español,
por favor pídasela a su enfermero o doctor.

Name of Health Care Provider: _____ Number: 336
For office use: Date returned: _____ db nb

Family Review of Handout

Health care providers: Please teach families with this handout.

Families: Please let us know what you think of this handout.

Would you say this handout is hard to read? Yes No

easy to read? Yes No

Please circle the parts of the handout that were hard to understand.

Would you say this handout is interesting to read? Yes No

Why or why not?

Would you do anything differently after reading
this handout? Yes No

If yes, what?

After reading this handout, do you have any
questions about the subject? Yes No

If yes, what?

Is there anything you don't like about the drawings?

Yes No

If yes, what?

What changes would you make in this handout to make it better or easier to understand?

Please return your review of this handout to your nurse or doctor or send it to the address below.

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Thank you for helping us!