

## **PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET**

### **LARYNGOPHARYNGEAL REFLUX**

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#### **What is laryngopharyngeal reflux (LPR)?**

- LPR is the reflux of acid and digestive enzymes from the stomach into the oesophagus (swallowing passage) up to the throat at the level of the voice box
- This is the same mechanism as that causing heartburn or indigestion (gastro oesophageal reflux disease- GORD) although most patients with LPR ***do not*** experience these symptoms
- The voice box is extremely sensitive to reflux and a small amount of reflux, not enough to cause GORD symptoms, can cause LPR ('silent reflux')

#### **What are the symptoms of LPR?**

- Reflux irritates the larynx causing swelling within the back of the voice box
- The common symptoms are sensation of mucus, irritation or a 'lump' in the throat
- Throat clearing and chronic cough are also common
- Pain and difficulty swallowing can occur although these are rare and require consideration of another cause

Reflux is treated with a combination of ***lifestyle and diet modification*** along with ***anti-reflux medications***

#### **What lifestyle modifications can I make to reduce my reflux?**

- Reduce weight
- Stop smoking
- Avoid large meals
- Don't eat within 3 hours of sleep
- Sleep with the head elevated
- Avoid medications that can increase reflux (such as anti-inflammatories)

#### **How can I change my diet to reduce LPR?**

- You should try to avoid foods that are known to aggravate reflux. These include:
  - Caffeine- coffee, tea, chocolate
  - Alcohol
  - Spicy foods, carbonated drinks, citrus juices
  - Fatty or greasy foods
  - Chewing gum

#### **What medical treatments are available?**

- There are a number of treatment options to reduce acid reflux
- Some act as a neutralizing agent and a physical barrier (e.g. Gaviscon)
- Others reduce the amount of acid secreted (e.g. proton pump inhibitors- Somac, Losec, Nexium or Histamine antagonists- Ranitidine)

#### **What about surgery?**

- Surgery is rarely required for treatment of reflux but may be considered if the medications and lifestyle changes don't work



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