

## Division of Pediatric Otolaryngology

### Gastroesophageal Reflux (GERD) (Silent Reflux) Precautions and Treatment

Reflux precautions are recommended for infants and children with symptoms due to reflux of acid from the stomach up into the throat and nose. If the symptoms are primarily seen in the ear, nose and/or throat area, this may be due to "Silent Reflux". These steps will help reduce episodes of reflux and do not involve medication or surgery. However medication and/or surgery may be necessary to treat moderate to severe reflux.

#### INFANTS

1. Give small frequent feedings rather than a few large ones to keep the stomach from over filling. Try 2-4 oz. every 2-4 hours.
2. Thicken feedings by adding 1 teaspoon up to 1 tablespoon of rice cereal to each ounce of formula. You may need a larger nipple opening to accommodate the thicker feedings.
3. Hold your baby in an upright position for thirty (30) minutes after each feeding. Minimize excessive/rapid motion (such as jostling or tossing up in the air).
4. When burping your infant hold him/her upright over your shoulder.
5. In general, keep your infant's head higher than his/her stomach. Raise the head of the crib (30 degrees or 6 inches). This can be accomplished in several ways:
  - a. Use 2-3 thick telephone books
  - b. 4-6 inch bricks under each leg of head of crib.
  - c. Use blanket rolls or sling to keep your baby from sliding down.Make sure there are no gaps between mattress and side rail where baby can slip through. Keep your baby's head higher than his stomach, but not so high that he slides down towards the end of the bed.
6. Position your baby on his/her left side when in bed (left side down). Do not keep a pillow, soft blanket or sheepskin under the baby's head.

#### CHILDREN & ADULTS

1. Eat three meals each day, avoiding excessive snacking. Avoid lying down for two hours after eating and for three hours before bedtime at night. Avoid any drinking for at least one hour before bedtime.
2. Lose excess weight; avoid tight clothing.
3. Elevate the head of the bed by placing 4 to 6 inch blocks under the legs at the head of bed.
4. **Most importantly, avoid fatty foods, chocolate, peppermint, onions, garlic, citrus juices, tomato products, coffee, caffeinated and carbonated beverages, alcohol and tobacco. These foods are known to increase and worsen reflux.**

*If reflux continues or worsens while using these precautions, please call.*