

Understanding Gastro-oesophageal Reflux



What is gastro-oesophageal reflux?

Gastro-oesophageal reflux, also called GOR, happens when the stomach contents come back up into the oesophagus or mouth (regurgitation).

What causes GOR?

In most babies with GOR, the ring of muscles that separate the stomach and the oesophagus is not fully developed. When the ring does not close tightly, the stomach contents can come back up into the oesophagus. As the baby matures, the muscles grow stronger and the reflux often stops.

GOR can also happen when the baby swallows too much air. This can occur when the baby is fed too much too quickly.

What are the symptoms of GOR?

Symptoms of GOR may include:

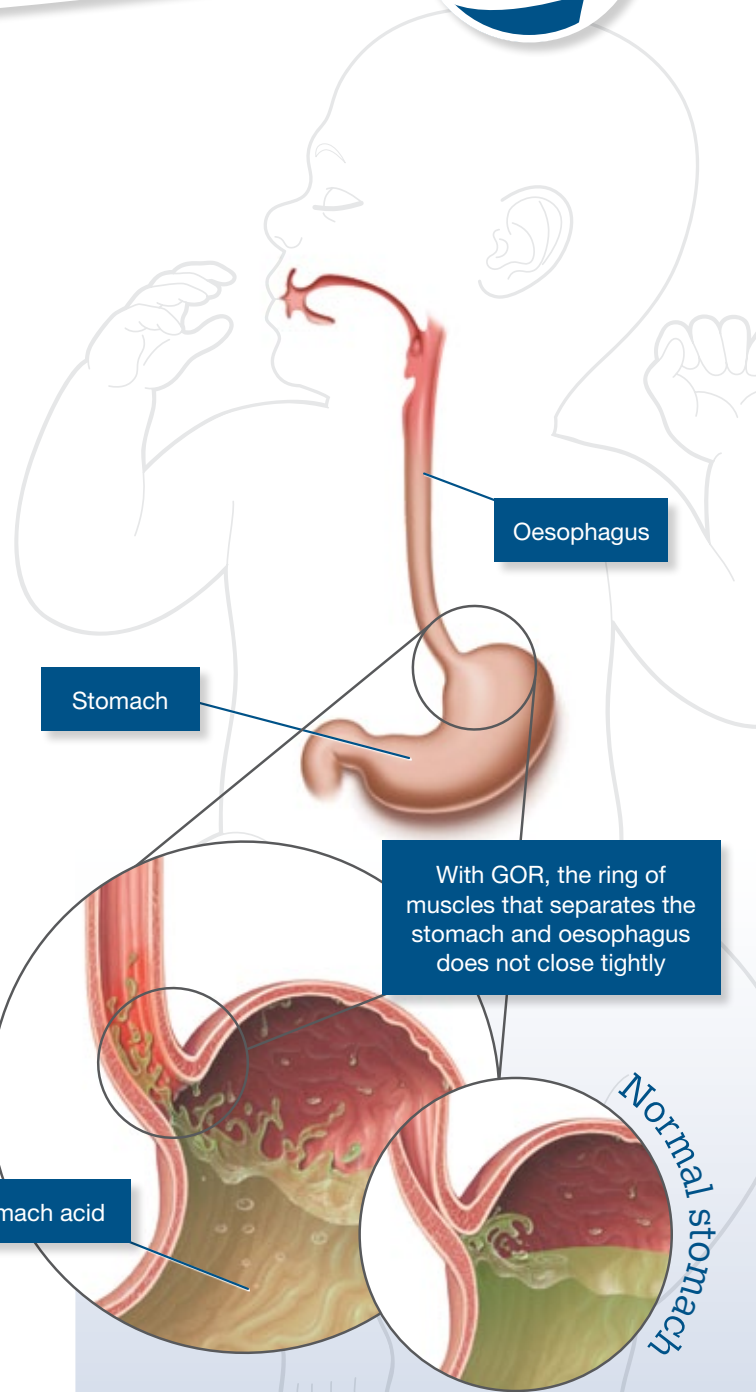
- Vomiting or regurgitation
- Refusing to eat
- Fussing during or after feeds
- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Crying when placed on his or her back, especially after feeding

How common is GOR?

GOR is very common especially in premature babies.

Does GOR cause permanent problems?

In most cases, GOR does not cause permanent harm to the baby. It usually goes away as the baby grows.



Gastro-oesophageal reflux

With GOR, the contents of the stomach back up into the oesophagus. Sometimes the stomach contents come out of the baby's mouth (the baby regurgitates).

Treating Gastro-oesophageal Reflux

What treatment will my baby receive?

Many cases of GOR can be helped by changing how the baby is fed. The healthcare team may recommend:

- Smaller, more frequent feeds
- Holding the baby upright (in a sitting position) during feedings and for 15 to 30 minutes after feeding
- Burping the baby during and after feedings
- Not bouncing or jiggling the baby after feeding

If these methods do not decrease your baby's GOR, the healthcare team may recommend medicine.

In a few cases, GOR may be a symptom of a more serious problem. If needed, tests will be ordered to find the cause of the problem. The healthcare team will talk with you about the tests and possible treatment.

What will happen next?

In most cases, GOR goes away on its own; however, each baby is different. Be sure to follow directions from the healthcare team. It is important to keep your baby's appointments after you leave the hospital.

Glossary

Oesophageal

related to the oesophagus

Oesophagus

tube connecting the mouth and the stomach

Gastro

related to the stomach

Gastro-oesophageal reflux (GOR)

stomach contents come back up into the oesophagus or mouth

**Ask the healthcare team
when you have questions
– they are there to help.**

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