

Acid reflux, GERD, heartburn

The most common disease of the upper gastrointestinal tract is frequently not diagnosed correctly and not treated adequately.

General information:

Acid reflux is the most common disease of the upper gastrointestinal tract with different manifestations. The most common symptom is **agonizing heartburn**. Apart from various symptoms, which seriously decrease the patients' quality of life depending on the severity of the condition, acid reflux can also cause severe damage to other organs, in particular the lung, as a result of extra-oesophageal manifestations (outside the oesophagus). Many patients diagnosed with **COPD** (chronically obstructive pulmonary disease) suffer from inadequately diagnosed or insufficiently treated acid reflux. In addition, GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease) is associated with a significant oncological complication, the so-called **Barrett's oesophagus**, a pre-cancerous condition and the **strongest risk factor for oesophageal adenocarcinoma**. The incidence of oesophageal cancer caused by reflux increases at a faster rate than any other tumour type in Western countries. In other words, a significant number of patients require adequate diagnosis and therapy.

Diagnosis:

Acid reflux diagnosis is based on three different methods

- **Gastroscopy** (=examination of oesophagus and stomach by endoscope under twilight sedation = completely painless)
- **Impedance measurement** (=measuring the frequency and potency of reflux that occurs in a 24-hour period)
- **Videocinematography** (= video-supported x-ray of swallowing act)

Therapy:

Therapy ranges from banal **lifestyle changes** to **drug therapy** to a **surgical reconstruction of the valve between stomach and oesophagus**, to treat reflux and its symptoms adequately and sufficiently.

Attention: a long-term therapy with acid blockers may have very unpleasant and serious side effects.

In the end, the **type of therapy** depends not only on the medical findings, but also on your individual symptoms, on your response to treatment, therapy success and on your personal preferences.

Please feel free to make an appointment for an in-depth consultation about diagnostic possibilities and therapies for your complaints to alleviate your symptoms.