

## Acid Reflux and Esophagus Cancer

Millions of people suffer from acid reflux on a daily basis. For most, it's a bothersome condition that causes mild discomfort. What many don't realize, however, is that acid reflux can lead to more serious and even life-threatening illnesses.

For years, doctors have been telling patients suffering from acid reflux to change their diets and eliminate certain foods. These "bad" foods can cause the stomach to create more acid than it should, thus creating the condition known as acid reflux. Clinical studies are presenting further proof that there is a direct link between acid reflux disease and esophagus cancer.

The esophagus is located near the stomach. In the initial stages of esophagus cancer, tiny tumours will develop and eventually spread to other parts of the body. This type of cancer has many symptoms including but not limited to: stomach problems, vomiting, loss of voice and blood in the urine and vomit. If a person suffers from any of these symptoms for a prolonged period of time, he or she must seek medical attention. Esophagus cancer has been linked to acid reflux, because the lining of the esophagus can actually be eaten away by the presence of stomach acid. As a protective measure, the body will cover the inside of the esophagus with secondary tissue. This tissue, however, can become cancerous. See your doctor if you are concerned.

If you suffer from acid reflux, there are ways that you can lower your risk of developing esophagus cancer. Drinking carbonated drinks is definitely not recommended as these beverages, such as cola, will raise the acid levels in the stomach for a prolonged period of time. If you were to drink even one can of pop per day, your stomach would have to produce more acid to break down the soda and make it digestible. As a result there will be more stomach acid than necessary, and that excess acid will travel up into the esophagus. This can have a disastrous effect. Cutting down on your soda consumption or better yet, not drinking it all, can keep your stomach from producing and releasing an unnecessarily high amount of stomach acid.

As you can well imagine, esophagus cancer is very uncomfortable to live with. People who suffer from esophagus cancer will have problems eating and keeping food down, and they are often in so much pain that they simply can't enjoy everyday living. Treating or easing the effects of this devastating condition may be possible with a change of diet and exercise regimes, taking medication as prescribed, and seeing the doctor when there is pain. In some cases, it may be possible to perform surgery to remove the affected tissue and keep the cancer from spreading. The surgery itself is risky, however, as it can cause permanent damage to the esophagus and make it harder to talk, swallow and digest food. Following surgery, some patients must be fed through a tube or have to survive on a liquid diet. This is, of course, incredibly uncomfortable and depressing for those who can no longer lead their once-active lives.

The risks of getting this cancer are higher for those with acid reflux disease. Talk with a doctor if stomach acid becomes a problem. Maintaining a healthy esophagus is very important, and regulating the acid today can help prevent esophagus cancer. There are many over the counter and prescription drugs available that can help to reduce the amount of acid in the stomach. These treatments, combined with exercise and a healthy diet, can combat the adverse effects of acid reflux and prevent worse conditions later on in life.