

Trudy Lynch Speech Pathology

Hurstville and Miranda

BaSc. Speech and Hearing Science | Certified Practicing Speech Pathologist

trudy.lynch@hotmail.com 0404022120

Reflux

Symptoms of reflux can include:

- Hoarseness
- Excessive mucous in the throat
- Chronic throat irritation
- Chronic throat clearing
- Heartburn
- Chronic cough
- Cough that wakes you
- Post nasal drip
- Difficulty swallowing
- Sensation of a lump in the throat

Prevention/Life Style Changes

The first line of treatment for reflux is **prevention**. The most important step is to minimise exposure to factors that interfere with the normal function of the oesophageal sphincter.

Reduce:

- Caffeine
- Chocolate
- Tobacco
- Carbonated beverages
- Alcohol
- Spicy foods

Other environmental changes can reduce amount and the effect of reflux:

- Meals should be eaten at least two hours before bedtime. Food in the stomach stimulates the production of acid. If you eat and then lie down, acidic stomach contents will more easily travel back up the oesophagus into the throat.
- Elevate the head of the bed approximately 20mm. Simply sleeping on extra pillows may compress the stomach and could make reflux worse. If the entire bed is tilted upwards, gravity reduces the backflow of stomach contents.

Medications can reduce the acidity of stomach contents. This should be discussed with your doctor.

Recent evidence suggests an additional barrier treatment such as Gaviscon dual action or Mylanta can reduce the backflow of stomach contents which can irritate the larynx. If you are taking other medications, you should discuss the use of this with your doctor.

Trudy Lynch Speech Pathology

Acknowledgements: Voice Care Australia and The Voice Centre at Eastern Virginia Medical School