

Care Gram

Gastritis

What Is Gastritis?

Gastritis is a term used when the stomach lining is irritated and inflamed. Gastritis can be acute or chronic. Acute gastritis is sudden and severe. Gastritis, which persists over time, is called chronic gastritis.

If left untreated, chronic gastritis can:

- Last for years, even a lifetime
- Lead to severe blood loss
- Increase your risk for stomach cancer

What Causes Gastritis?

The most common causes of gastritis are:

- Prolonged use of aspirin or other anti-inflammatory drugs
- Helicobacter pylori (H. pylori) infection – A type of bacteria that lives in the mucous lining of the stomach

Less common causes include:

- Excess alcohol use
- Chronic vomiting
- Other viral or bacterial infections
- Other disorders
 - Pernicious anemia – A type of anemia in which the stomach cannot absorb and digest vitamin B12
 - Bile reflux – A backflow of bile (a substance produced in the gallbladder/liver) into the stomach

What Are the Symptoms of Gastritis?

Symptoms of gastritis include:

- Nausea or recurring upset stomach
- Stomach bloating
- Stomach pain
- Vomiting
- Burning or gnawing feeling in the stomach between meals or at night
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting blood or coffee ground-like material
- Black, tarry stools
- No symptoms at all



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How Is Gastritis Treated?

- Antacids and other medicines to reduce stomach acid
- An antibiotic, if your gastritis is caused by bacteria, such as *H. pylori*
- Vitamin B12 shots, if your gastritis is caused by pernicious anemia

Gastritis most often goes away when the cause is corrected. Call your doctor:

- If you have severe stomach pain, blood in your vomit or black, tarry stools
- If your symptoms awaken you from sleep, keep you from eating, or interfere with work or school
- If your symptoms continue to get worse or do not improve within 6 weeks
- Before you stop any medicine
- Start any treatment on your own