

Reflux

Your child has been diagnosed or suspected to have Reflux and may have any of the following symptoms:

- Smaller amounts often occur with burping ("wet burps")
- Larger amounts can occur after overfeeding or severe reflux
- Usually seen during or shortly after feedings
- Occurs mainly in children under 1 year of age and begins in the first weeks of life

CAUTION: normal reflux does not cause any crying

Causes

- Poor closure of the valve at the upper end of the stomach
- Overfeeding of formula or breastmilk can be a factor. Filling the stomach to capacity always makes spitting up worse. Most babies let you know when their stomach is full. Some do not and keep on accepting more milk.
- More than half of all infants have occasional spitting up
- Reflux occurs in over 50% of infants.
- Most infants are "happy spitters". They have normal spitting up.

Care & Treatment

- Formula - Feed Smaller Amounts. Filling the stomach to capacity always makes spitting up worse. Most babies let you know when their stomach is full. However, some do not and keep on accepting more milk.
- Longer Feeding Intervals
 - Formula: Wait at least 2 1/2 hours between feedings.
 - Breastmilk: Wait at least 2 hours between feedings.
- Avoid tight diapers. It puts added pressure on the stomach.
 - Don't put pressure on the abdomen or play vigorously with your child right after meals.
- After meals, try to hold your baby in the upright (vertical) position. Use a front-pack, backpack, or swing for 30 to 60 minutes.
- Reduce time in sitting position (e.g., infant seats).
 - After 6 months of age, a jumpy seat is helpful (the newer ones are stable).
 - Even during breast or bottle feedings, keep your baby's head higher than the stomach. Hold them at a slant.
- Less Pacifier Time - Constant sucking on a pacifier can pump the stomach up with swallowed air.
- Bottle use: on a bottle with too small a nipple hole. If the formula doesn't drip out at a rate of 1 drop per second when held upside down, clean the nipple better. If that doesn't work, get a nipple with a larger hole.
- Burping
 - You can burp your baby 2 or 3 times during each feeding. Do it when they pause and look around. Don't interrupt their feeding rhythm to burp them.
 - Burp each time for less than a minute.
 - Stop even if no burp occurs. Some babies don't need to burp.

What to Expect

- Reflux improves with age.
- It peaks at 3 to 4 months of age.
- Many babies are better by 7 months of age, after learning to sit well.
- After learning to walk, it is rare.

When to Call

- It becomes vomiting
- Choking on milk occurs frequently
- Your baby doesn't improve with above care tips
- Your baby becomes worse

Continue Self-Care at Home

- Normal reflux (spitting up) with no complications

Call Office to be Seen Within 24-72 Hours

- Baby chokes on milk and mild (choking lasts less than 10 seconds) but occurs frequently
- Coughing illness persists > 3 weeks
- Poor weight gain
- Frequent, unexplained fussiness
- Spitting up becoming worse (i.e., increased amount)
- Taking reflux meds for spitting up and not helping

Call Office to be Seen Urgently or Contact Emergency On-Call Provider

- Taking reflux meds and severe crying/screaming that can't be consoled
- "Reflux" diagnosed but has changed to vomiting

Go to ER Now

- Newborn < 4 weeks starts to look or act abnormal in any way
- Choked on milk and non-severe difficulty breathing persists
- Spitup contains blood
- Bile (green color) in the spitup

Call 911 Now

- Choked on milk and severe difficulty breathing persists (struggling for each breath or bluish lips or face now)