Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)

What can I do to prevent or reduce reflex?

- **Limit Caffeine.** Limit coffee to 2-3 cups per day. Limiting consumption of other caffeine-containing beverages (tea, soft drinks) may also be helpful.

- **Avoid Tight Clothing:** Tight belts, tight pants or girdles can increase the pressure on the stomach.

- **Avoid Foods That Cause Your Symptoms:** Foods to avoid are:
  - spicy and fatty foods
  - tomato and citrus juices (such as grapefruit and orange juices)
  - chocolate, mints, coffee, tea, cola, and alcoholic drinks.

- **Do Not Lie Down for 2 Hours After Eating:** Allow gravity to work. Also, avoid bending over at the waist to pick up things; instead bend at the knees.

- **Stop Smoking:** If you cannot stop, decreasing the number of cigarettes you smoke may help.

- **Bed Blocks:** Elevate the head of your bed 2-6 inches with wood blocks or bricks. Using extra pillows is NOT a good substitute. Use of a foam wedge beneath the upper half of the body is an alternative.

- **Maintain Your Ideal Weight:** Excess weight increases the amount of pressure constantly placed on your stomach. Even small amounts of weight loss may help.

- **Antacids:** Can be taken at bedtime and 30-60 minutes after each meal or as directed by your physician.

- **Acid Suppression Medications:** These medications should be taken 30-60 minutes before meals.

- **Eat Smaller Meals:** Don’t overfill your stomach.