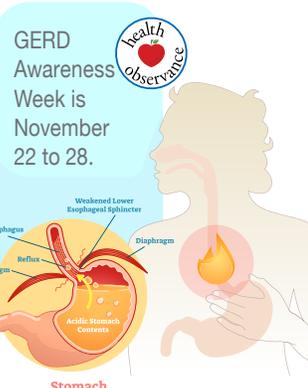




Get Ahead of GERD



Don't let gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) get in the way of celebrating Turkey Day. Thanksgiving is a time for family feasts — and overeating is often a part of the celebration.

Unfortunately, overindulgence in food and drink can trigger or worsen the symptoms for those with GERD, a common and often chronic condition. Symptoms include frequent heartburn, painful swallowing, nausea and regurgitation of acid.

You can get ahead of GERD and often help prevent it with these strategies:

- Over-the-counter medications, including antacids, H2 blockers (such as famotidine) and the more potent proton pump inhibitors (e.g., omeprazole and lansoprazole) can calm GERD symptoms. Take them only as needed; consult your health care provider.
- When you eat is important, too. Avoid eating at least two to three hours before bedtime. Commit to not overeating. Avoid greasy or spicy foods and overdoing caffeine and alcoholic drinks.
- Work on losing excess weight to decrease pressure on your lower esophageal sphincter muscles, which normally keep food from rising into your esophagus.
- If GERD symptoms persist, talk to your provider. You may need additional tests or treatments. Some medications may worsen the symptoms.

Bacterial vs. Viral — What's Bugging You?

Bacteria and viruses are microscopic organisms that can produce infections. Both types of microbes can cause mild, moderate, severe and long-term diseases. The major differences?

Bacteria thrive in many different environments. Most are harmless; some help you digest food, destroy diseases and fight cancer cells. Infections caused by bacteria include strep throat, tuberculosis and urinary tract infections.

Viruses are smaller than bacteria and require living hosts — people, animals and plants — to multiply and survive. Some are beneficial. A virus can invade your cells, attacking the liver, blood, respiratory and other systems resulting in widespread infectious diseases, such as common colds, chickenpox, COVID-19 and AIDS.

Determining whether a bacteria or virus is causing your symptoms can be confusing. Several ailments, such as pneumonia, meningitis and diarrhea, can be caused by either bacteria or viruses, and trigger similar symptoms (fever, vomiting, coughing) that prompt the immune system to eliminate infection.

Vaccines have drastically decreased viral diseases including polio, measles and chickenpox, and can prevent influenza, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, HPV and other infections. Vaccines work by stimulating the production of antibodies that help provide immunity against diseases.

Antibiotic drugs can kill bacteria but are not effective against viruses. Treating viral infections focuses on controlling symptoms as the infection runs its course.

Meanwhile, health organizations advise against using antibiotics unless there is clear evidence of bacterial infection. Overuse of antibiotics has contributed to widespread antibiotic resistance. Worldwide, 700,000 people die each year due to drug-resistant diseases, according to the World Health Organization.

Cybersecurity Confidential

Whether you use a computer for your job or for games and hobbies, you know that even one cybersecurity breach can put your work, identity and privacy at risk. The FTC offers these basics to help reduce the chance of a cyber attack. Always employ these basic measures for your desktop, laptop, tablet and smart devices:

1. Update your software. Set automatic updates so you don't forget.
2. Encrypt all devices — laptops, personal computers, smartphones, tablets, routers, backup drives and cloud storage.
3. Backup and secure files. Store all important files on an external hard drive or cloud so you're covered if the unthinkable happens.
4. Require strong passwords. Make sure passwords contain at least 12 characters that are a mix of numbers, upper- and lowercase letters and symbols. **Note:** Your employer may require you to change your password periodically and take other preventive measures.
5. Use multifactor authentication, which means that you require additional steps beyond logging on with a password.

To learn more, search for **cybersecurity** at [ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov).

Note: Due to production lead time, this issue may not reflect the current COVID-19 situation in some or all regions of the U.S. For the most up-to-date information visit [coronavirus.gov](https://www.coronavirus.gov).

The **Smart Moves Toolkit**, including this issue's printable download, **5 Ways to Stop Winter Weight Gain** is at personalbest.com/extras/20V11tools.

