

# What is Reflux

**Infant reflux is when a baby spits up liquid or food. It happens when stomach contents move back up from the baby's stomach into the esophagus (the tube that goes from the throat to the stomach).** Throwing up or food coming up into the mouth (regurgitation) is common in infants due to their liquid diets and spending a lot of time lying down. However, if more severe or longer lasting, reflux can lead to insufficient weight gain or inability to eat well.

## Signs & Symptoms of reflux in infants

- Vomiting more than 5 times a day
- Unable to consume more than an ounce at a time
- Crying occurs after every meal even in the early hours of the day
- Crying after feedings does not improve after three months of age
- Episodes of hoarseness or wheezing
- Abnormal arching
- Wet burps or hiccups

\*if you notice any of these symptoms with your infant, please reach out to your doctor or health care provider for more information.

## Helping your infant during feeding time

- Feed your infant while they are sitting up
- Burp your infant frequently during feedings
- Be slow and gentle with position changes during and immediately after feeds
- Gentle bouncing of your infant helps moves trapped gas, but should not be done within 30 minutes of feed
- Making sure you are feeding your infant the correct amount determined by your doctor or health care provider - do not over-feed your baby as this can make reflux symptoms worse
- Your doctor or health care provider may suggest feeding them thick formula to help decrease the reflux
- Keep your infant in an upright position for 30 minutes post feeds, when able, especially for babies who frequently spit up post feeds

The following information was created based on the work of: Nationwide Children's Hospital. (2023). *Gastroesophageal reflux disease in infants*. Nationwide Children's Hospital.