

...and we've arranged all of our non-prescription medicines by the specific health conditions that interest you most



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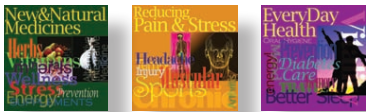
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**Cass Street Pharmacy**  
*(at the corner of 6th and Cass Street)*  
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**(608) 784-9922**

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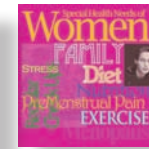
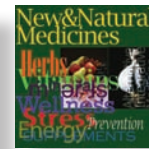
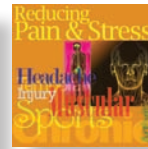
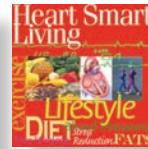
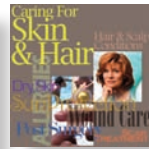
**Tel: (608) 793-1828**



**Gastroesophageal  
Reflux Disease**  
(GERD)



**Cass Street  
Pharmacy**



## What is GERD?

**Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD)** is defined as a condition which develops when the reflux of stomach content into the esophagus causes troublesome symptoms and complications.

Approximately 44% of the American population suffer from GERD symptoms monthly, and more than 20% suffer with symptoms on a weekly basis.

The most common symptom of GERD is heartburn, which is often described as a burning feeling rising from the stomach or lower chest up towards the neck.

While heartburn is rarely life-threatening, it can greatly reduce your quality of life by affecting your daily activities, your sleep, and what you eat.

Fortunately, this condition can often be controlled through behavior modification and over the counter medication.

## What are the treatment options?

Several lifestyle modifications have proven valuable in the treatment of acid reflux:

- Weight reduction if needed (*obese patients are 2.8 times more likely to experience GERD symptoms*)
- Elevation of the head of the bed (*approximately 6-8 inches with blocks or a foam wedge under the mattress*)
- Eating smaller meals and avoidance of eating 3 hours prior to sleeping
- Avoidance of foods that exacerbate symptoms (*chocolate, peppermint, spicy foods, orange juice, tomato juice, coffee, carbonated beverages, etc.*)
- Avoidance of medications that exacerbate symptoms if possible (*aspirin, anti-inflammatory drugs, and pain medications other than acetaminophen*)
- Quitting smoking (*cigarettes decrease the ability of the muscle between the stomach and esophagus to function properly*)
- Avoidance of alcohol

## What are the medication options?

In addition to the lifestyle modifications, there are a number of over-the-counter and prescription medications available to relieve heartburn symptoms. These medications work to neutralize stomach acid (*antacids*) or reduce acid production (*H2-receptor blockers or proton pump inhibitors*).

- Antacids may be used to achieve the most rapid relief of symptoms, with relief expected within 5-15 minutes and effects lasting for only about 1-3 hours.
- H2-receptor blockers such as Zantac®, Pepsid®, or Tagamet® require about 1-2 hours for initial effect
- Proton pump inhibitors Prilosec® and Prevacid®, requires 2-3 hours for initial effect and up to 3 days for maximum relief.
- Antacids are reserved for mild GERD symptoms and proton pump inhibitors are generally more effective than H2-receptor blockers.

Never hesitate to ask your pharmacist whether over the counter treatment is appropriate for you.

If prolonged or frequent use of nonprescription medicines (*more than directed on the product*) becomes necessary, or if they do not completely control symptoms, a physician should be consulted.