

# Gastritis

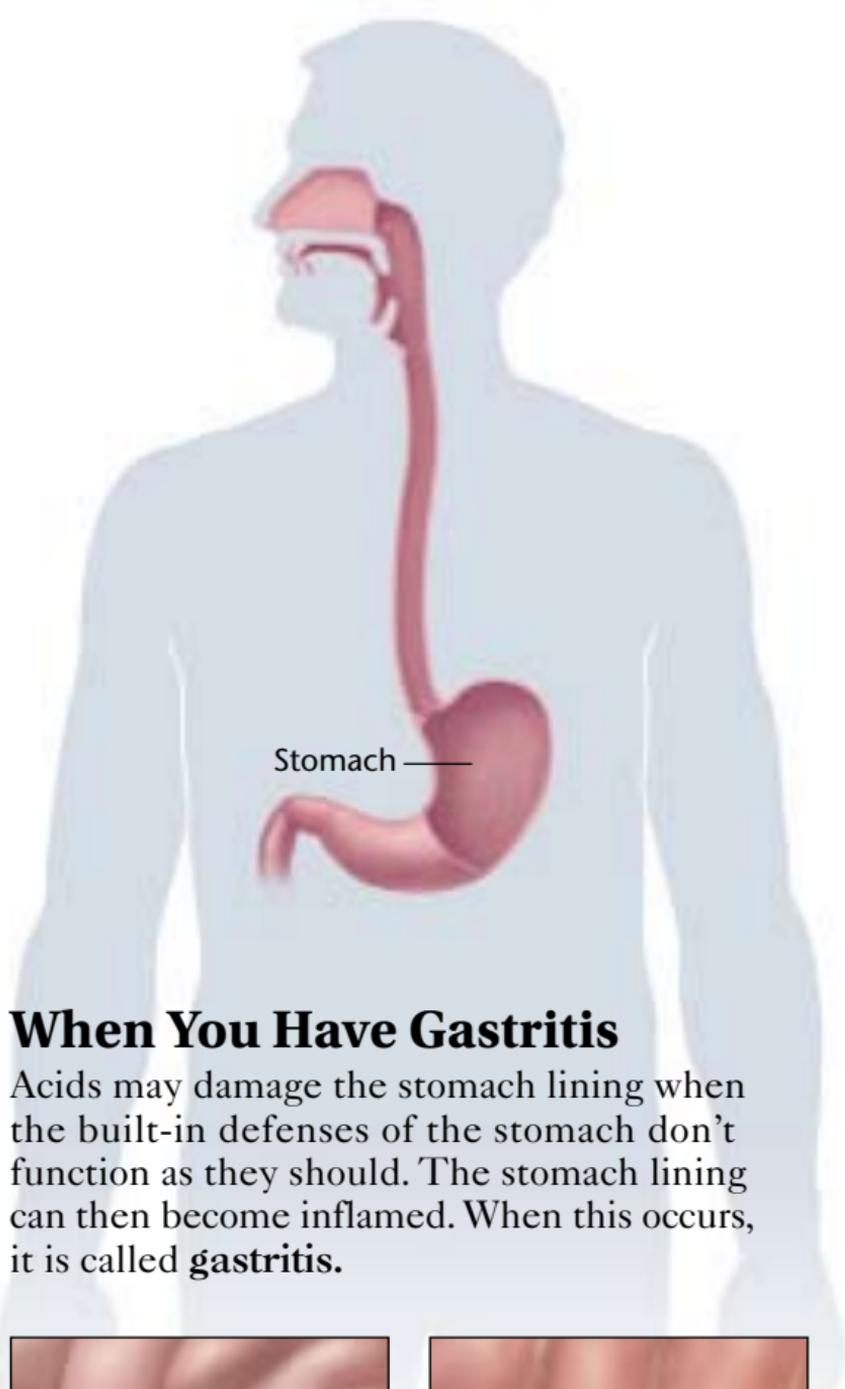
---

**An Inflammation of the  
Stomach Lining**



# The Stomach

To digest the food you eat, your stomach makes strong acids and enzymes. A healthy stomach has built-in defenses that protect its lining from damage by these acids and enzymes.



## When You Have Gastritis

Acids may damage the stomach lining when the built-in defenses of the stomach don't function as they should. The stomach lining can then become inflamed. When this occurs, it is called **gastritis**.



A healthy stomach lining



An irritated or inflamed stomach lining

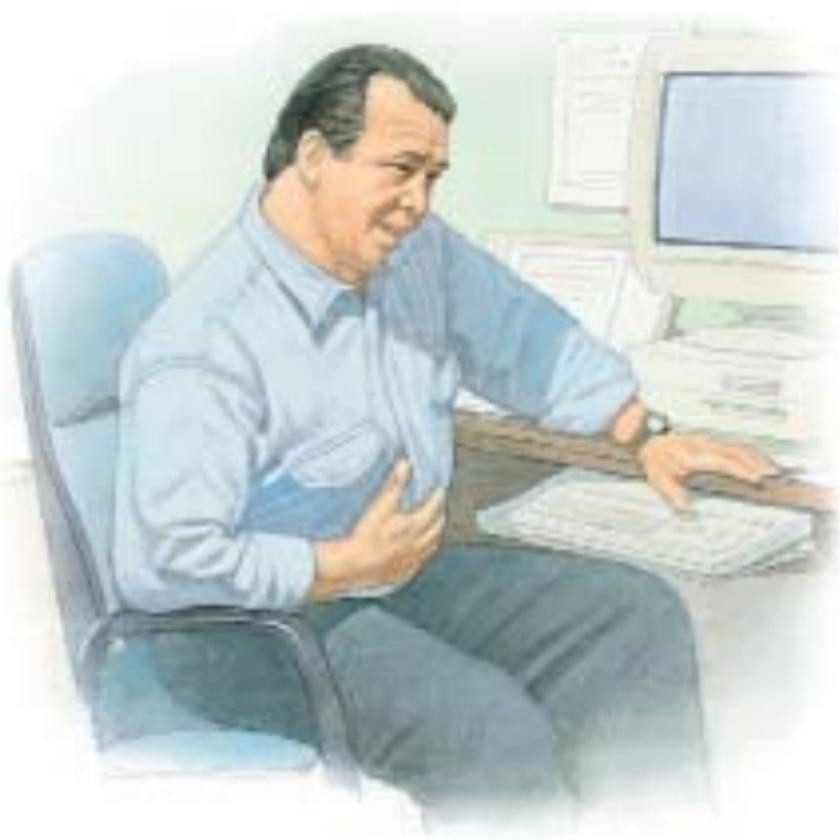
# What Is Gastritis?

Gastritis is a painful inflammation of the stomach lining. It has a number of causes. Gastritis and its symptoms can be relieved with treatment. Work with your doctor to find ways to treat your symptoms.

## Common Symptoms

With gastritis, you may notice one or more of the following:

- A burning feeling in your upper abdomen
- Pain that occurs after eating certain foods
- Gas or a bloated feeling in your stomach
- Frequent belching
- Nausea with or without vomiting



## Causes of Gastritis

Gastritis has many causes. They may include:

- Aspirin and anti-inflammatory medications
- Stress
- Tobacco use
- Alcohol use
- *Helicobacter pylori* (*H. pylori*) bacteria

# Your Evaluation

A medical evaluation will be done to find out the cause of your symptoms. The evaluation may include your health history, an exam, and some tests.

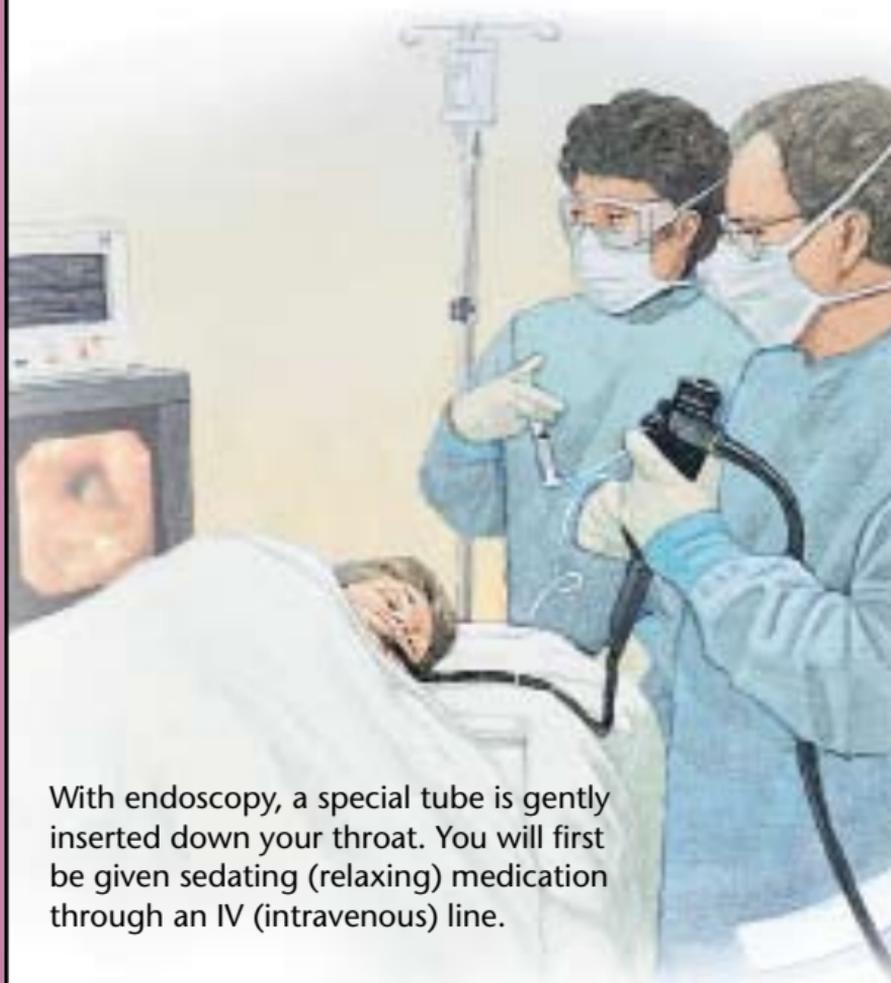
## Health History and Physical Exam

Your doctor will ask you about your health and lifestyle. Be sure to mention all your symptoms. You may be asked whether you smoke or take pain-relieving medications. Your doctor may also check your abdomen for any tenderness.

## Special Tests You May Have

You may need certain tests, such as:

- **An endoscopy** to look directly at your stomach lining using a long flexible tube. A small sample of the stomach lining may be removed and sent for a lab test.
- **Blood tests** to show if you have *H. pylori*.
- **A barium upper gastrointestinal series** to give the doctor an image of your stomach. You'll be asked to drink a chalky liquid containing barium. This liquid enhances the x-ray images taken of your stomach.



With endoscopy, a special tube is gently inserted down your throat. You will first be given sedating (relaxing) medication through an IV (intravenous) line.

## Your Treatment

Once your evaluation is done, treatment can begin. It may include taking certain medications and making some lifestyle changes. Follow your doctor's advice.

### Taking Medications

Your doctor may prescribe some medications to neutralize or reduce excess stomach acids. If tests show that *H. pylori* are in your stomach lining, antibiotics may be prescribed.

### Avoiding Certain Things

**Aspirin.** Avoid taking aspirin and other anti-inflammatory medications. They can irritate your stomach lining. Also, check with your doctor before taking or stopping any medications.

**Spicy Foods and Caffeine.** Stay away from foods prepared with spices, especially black pepper. Caffeine can also make your symptoms worse. So, avoid coffee, tea, cola drinks, and chocolate. Be sure to tell your doctor about any other foods or liquids that bother your stomach.

**Tobacco and Alcohol.** Don't use tobacco or drink alcohol. Tobacco and alcohol can increase stomach acids and worsen your gastritis symptoms.



### Reducing Your Stress

Stress may make your gastritis symptoms worse. Whenever you can, reduce the stress in your life. To help do this, talk to your doctor about starting an exercise program. And get enough sleep each night.

# What You Can Do

There are things you can do to help your stomach heal and keep gastritis from returning. Take your medications as directed, even if your stomach pain goes away. Avoid foods that make your symptoms worse. Also, avoid alcohol and tobacco, as well as aspirin and other anti-inflammatory medications. Learn ways to manage your stress better.



This product is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care.

©2010 The StayWell Company.  
www.krames.com 800-333-3032  
All rights reserved.

**KRAMES.**  
**PATIENT EDUCATION**  
A MedMedia Company  
www.krames.com 800-333-3032