

# Hiccups or Burps - Normal

## Definition

- Hiccups are repeated gulping sounds caused by sudden spasms of the diaphragm
- Burping is the sound made by the sudden release of stomach air through the mouth

## Health Information

### Hiccups: Causes

- Hiccups are most often caused by an over-full stomach from eating too much. The bloated stomach presses against the diaphragm and triggers hiccups. The diaphragm is a dome-shaped muscle between the chest and the abdomen.
- Drinking carbonated soda can bloat the stomach with gas.
- Swallowing too much air can occur with chewing gum or sucking on a pacifier.
- Repeated sniffing and swallowing of post nasal drip can be a trigger.
- Very spicy foods may trigger hiccups.
- In teens, alcohol may be a trigger.
- Acid reflux may be a cause in people with frequent hiccups

### Burping or Belching: Causes

- Burps are the sound made when air is released from the stomach through the mouth. This is a normal reaction that can occur after a large meal.
- Cause: Bloated or overfull stomach from eating or drinking too much.
- Normal in infants if lots of air is swallowed during bottle or breast feeding.
- Toddlers who suck on thumbs or pacifiers can also swallow lots of air.

## Care Advice

### Hiccups - Treatment

1. **Overview on Hiccups:**
  - Hiccups are very common.
  - They last for a short time (minutes to an hour).
  - While they can cause some discomfort, they do not cause any harm.
  - Hiccups often quickly go away even if you do nothing.
  - If not, home remedies can work too.
  - Here is some care advice that should help.
2. **Table Sugar (1st) - Age 1 Year or Older:**
  - Swallow a teaspoonful (5 mL) of dry regular white sugar.
  - Can repeat several times at 1-minute intervals.
  - For children 1-3 years old, wet the sugar first with some water.
  - If you prefer, use honey instead.
3. **Liquid Antacid (2nd) - Age 1 year or Older:**
  - If you have some, swallow 1-3 teaspoons (5-15 ml) of liquid antacid.

4. **Peanut Butter (3rd) - Age 4 Years or Older:**
  - Swallow 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of plain peanut butter. Repeat once.
  - Caution: Don't use before 4 years old. Reason: can cause choking.
5. **Other Home Remedies for Older Children:**
  - Sip warm water
  - Drink water through a straw while pinching the nose
  - Gargle with warm water
  - Bite into a slice of lemon
  - Swallow a teaspoon (5 ml) of mustard
  - Take a deep breath and hold it as long as possible
6. **Hiccups in Babies (Age less than 1 year):**
  - Loosen the diaper at the waist and hold your baby upright.
  - Try burping your baby.
  - Offer a few swallows of warm water.
  - If that doesn't work, offer a few swallows of breastmilk or formula.

### **Burping - Prevention**

1. **Excessive Burping - Prevention:**
  - Burping is a normal reflex that occurs in everyone at times.
  - Treatment: None needed. Unlike hiccups, burping does not cause discomfort.
  - Also only needs to occur 1 to 4 times to make the stomach less bloated.
  - Prevent Burping: Avoid swallowing too much air as from carbonated beverages or chewing gum.
  - For younger child, avoid air swallowing that occurs with sucking on a pacifier.

### **Call Your Doctor If**

- Hiccups last more than 2 hours (the usual time needed to empty the stomach)
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

### **Pediatric Care Advice**

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