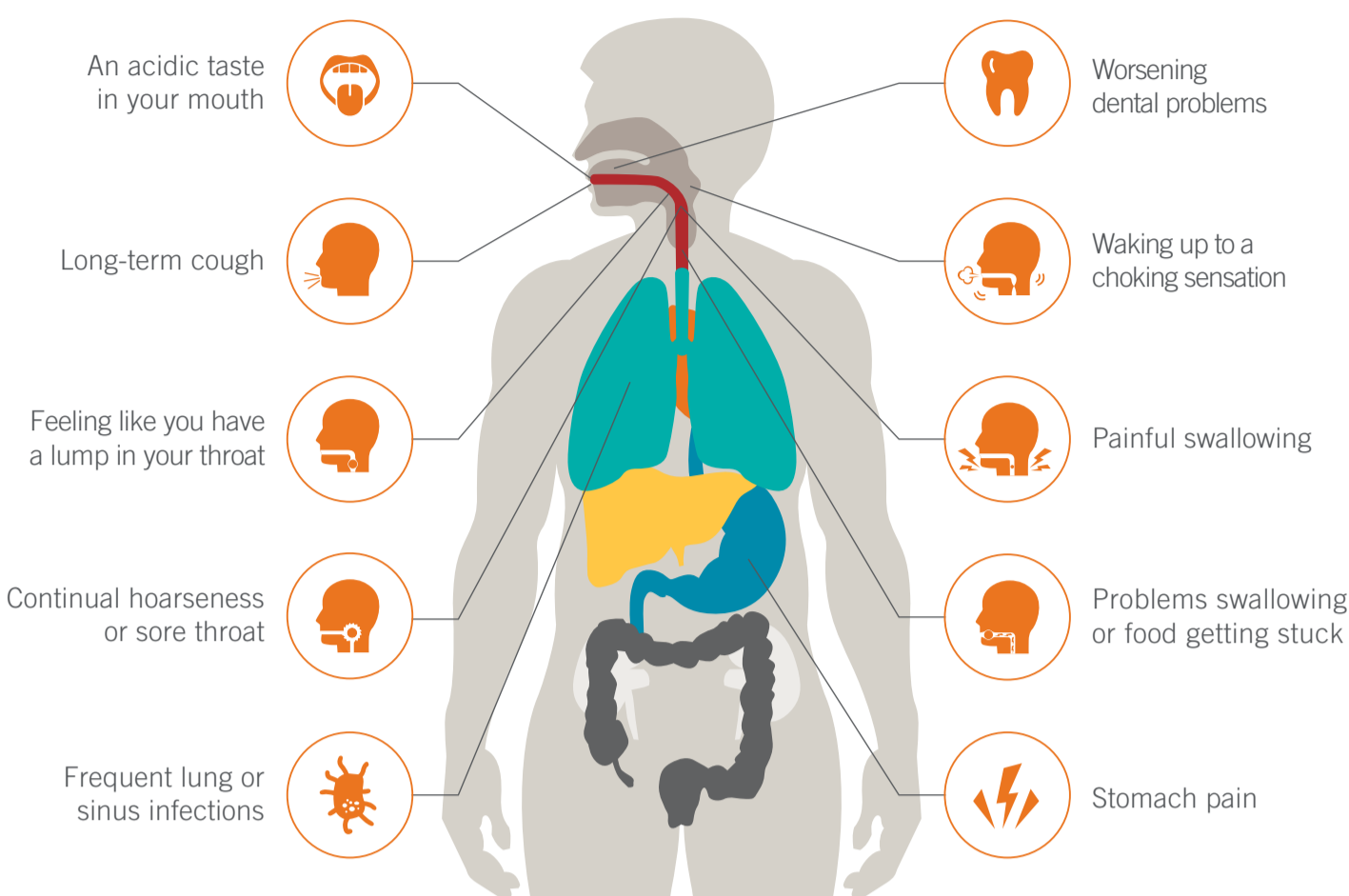


# Let's talk about GERD

GERD is short for gastroesophageal reflux disease. It is mild acid reflux, a condition that occurs at least twice a week. Essentially it's stomach acid that flows from the stomach back up through your esophagus, and causes burning chest pain. Other symptoms include difficulty swallowing and regurgitation of food or liquid and a sour taste in your mouth.

Additional symptoms include:



According to the National Institutes of Health, **20 percent** of the US population experiences symptoms of GERD and anyone can develop the disease, often for reasons unknown.

We do know, though, that you are more likely to get GERD if you are:

- Overweight or obese
- Taking certain medications, including some asthma medications, antihistamines, antidepressants, painkillers and sedatives
- Pregnant
- A smoker or someone regularly exposed to secondhand smoke

## What Should You Do?

If you suffer from GERD, taking over-the-counter or prescription drugs may help relieve symptoms like heartburn. But often these medications don't solve the real problem - reflux of stomach contents into the esophagus. At the Norton Thoracic Institute, we can help you treat your GERD.

## Norton Thoracic Institute

Norton Thoracic Institute (NTI) is a leader in diagnosing and treating GERD. In fact, some of the best experts in the country are right here in Phoenix, and are ready to work with you to combat your illness. We start by doing a thorough evaluation of your condition. And then we get to work. Together, we'll decide the best course of treatment. Oftentimes, lifestyle and diet changes are the first thing we recommend:

- Avoid trigger foods like alcohol, caffeine, chocolate, and fatty foods
- Eat at least two hours before going to bed
- Lose weight
- Quit smoking
- Raise your head six to eight inches off the bed at night

### Foods to avoid:



Early diagnosis and treatment can prevent or reduce injury to the esophagus.

If you suffer from GERD, NTI can help.

## How We Treat GERD

If lifestyle changes don't work, and over-the-counter antacids aren't relieving your symptoms, we may recommend one or more of the following:

**Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs)** such as AcipHex, Dexilant, Nexium, Prevacid, Prilosec or Protonix. While PPIs can relieve heartburn, they don't treat the underlying reflux.

**Laparoscopic fundoplication surgery** to strengthen the valve at the bottom of the esophagus.

**LINX reflux management system** which uses a small, flexible band of magnets implanted around a weak esophageal sphincter to help prevent reflux.

## Less GERD, More Relief

Most individuals with GERD are successfully treated with acid blocking medications such as PPIs.

**30%** However, nearly 30% of individuals on PPI medication continue to suffer from symptoms.

If you or a loved one are between the ages of **22 and 75** and suffer from chronic reflux, take PPI medication, and continue to suffer from reflux symptoms, consider participating in the **LESS GERD TRIAL**.

Ask the experts at NTI for more information.

## The ABCs of NTI

From acid reflux to Barrett's Esophagus to COPD and everything related to the chest, esophagus and lungs, Norton Thoracic Institute offers comprehensive services and state-of-the-art care. Because of our advanced training and our technology driven facility, we can provide both medical and surgical treatment options, all to get you back to the life you love.

We're located inside Dignity Health St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center at 350 W. Thomas Road in Phoenix, and at Norton Thoracic Institute at 485 S. Dobson Road, Suite 100 in Chandler.

If you have a burning need to talk to someone about your GERD, call us today: **602.406.4000**.

Visit [dignityhealth.org/Arizona/GERD](http://dignityhealth.org/Arizona/GERD) for more information.