



Examining the Difference between Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease and Gastric Anisakiasis

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DESCRIPTION

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) is a complex condition that affects the lower esophageal sphincter, a muscle responsible for keeping food and stomach acids contained in the stomach. When the sphincter fails to function properly, stomach acids can back up into the esophagus, causing irritation and inflammation. GERD is often referred to as heartburn or acid reflux. Gastric Anisakiasis is an infectious parasitic disease caused by a type of worm called *Anisakis simplex*. The larvae of this worm live in the digestive system, where they cause severe abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and even anaphylactic shock. In some cases, gastric anisakiasis can cause intense pain in the abdomen that lasts for several days. To get a deeper look at the difference between GERD and gastric anisakiasis it is important to understand what causes them both. GERD occurs when stomach acid backs up into the esophagus due to malfunctioning of the lower esophageal sphincter muscle while gastric anisakiasis is caused by worms that live in the digestive system.

GERD and gastric anisakiasis are two different digestive conditions that share similar symptoms but have vastly different causes. While both can cause some of the same symptoms, they need to be treated differently in order for patients to effectively manage their condition. Here, we will take a deeper look at the difference between GERD and gastric anisakiasis, including examining the common symptoms associated with each condition. The most common symptom of GERD is heartburn, which is a burning sensation in the chest caused by stomach acid passing back from the stomach to the esophagus. Other symptoms include difficulty swallowing, chronic coughing or hoarseness, regurgitation of food or sour liquid, chest pain, sore throat, nausea and vomiting. Severe symptoms may also include weight loss due to poor nutrition or loss of appetite. Gastric anisakiasis is caused by consuming larvae from certain species of fish. Symptoms can vary depending on where in the digestive tract the larvae has attached itself. Common signs and symptoms may include abdominal pain or discomfort, nausea and

vomiting, diarrhea, loss of appetite and weight loss due to malabsorption.

GERD and Gastric Anisakiasis are both commonly found digestive disorders that can cause symptoms such as abdominal pain, bloating, nausea and vomiting. While the two conditions share some similarities, there are also important differences between them that can greatly affect the treatments available. We will take a closer look at these two conditions that will be helpful to understand the difference between them and how to best approach treatment. Treatment for GERD typically involves lifestyle changes such as avoiding certain foods and beverages or losing weight if needed. Medications like antacids, histamine-2 blockers or proton pump inhibitors may also be used to reduce stomach acid production. Surgery is an option if other treatments have failed. The first line of treatment for gastric anisakiasis is usually medications that kill the parasites, such as albendazole or ivermectin. If symptoms persist after medication has been taken, surgery may be recommended to remove any remaining parasites from the digestive tract.

GERD is a chronic digestive disorder characterized by the flow of stomach acid into the esophagus, causing irritation and potentially damaging the lining of the esophagus. Gastric Anisakiasis occurs when an individual consumes raw or undercooked seafood containing parasitic worms called *Anisakis* larva. Both GERD and gastric anisakiasis share common symptoms, but they are two distinct conditions that require different treatment plans. In this blog, we will take a deeper look at the differences between GERD and gastric anisakiasis as well as their prevention methods. The most common way to prevent GERD is making lifestyle modifications such as changing eating habits and avoiding certain foods like spicy food, citrus fruits, tomatoes, garlic, onions, fried food etc. Other preventive measures include avoiding late-night meals; elevating the head while sleeping; not wearing tight clothing; and quitting smoking or drinking alcohol. Additionally, antacids can be taken to help neutralize stomach acid which helps reduce symptoms of GERD. To prevent anisakiasis, one must avoid consuming uncooked fish

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or seafood that could contain parasites such as herring, mackerel, codfish and salmon. It is also important to properly cook fish at temperatures above 60°C for at least 5 minutes in order to kill any parasites present in the fish. If one purchase the frozen fish or seafood, then make sure it has been frozen for at least 24 hours at temperature below -20°C before cooking it.

CONCLUSION

Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) and Gastric Anisakiasis are two conditions that are commonly confused for one another. Though they can cause similar symptoms such as abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and difficulty swallowing food,

they have many differences in their causes, treatments, and long-term health outcomes. GERD is caused by the relaxation of muscles between the stomach and esophagus that allow acid to travel back up into the esophagus from the stomach. The primary treatment for GERD is making lifestyle changes such as eating smaller meals and avoiding foods that may trigger GERD symptoms. Gastric Anisakiasis is caused by a parasitic worm usually found in raw fish or squid. Treatment is more complex and involves medications to kill the parasite as well taking strong digestive acids to kill any other parasites in the digestive tract. Understanding the differences between GERD and Gastric Anisakiasis can help someone determine what type of condition they have and provide them with an appropriate treatment plan.