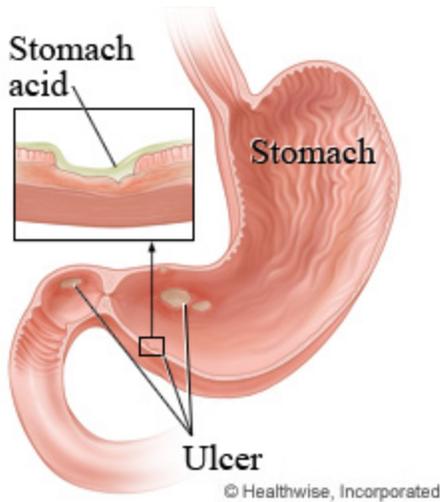


# Peptic Ulcer Disease: After Your Visit

## Your Care Instructions



Peptic ulcers are sores on the inside of the stomach or the small intestine. They are usually caused by an infection with bacteria or from use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs). NSAIDs include aspirin, ibuprofen (Advil), and naproxen (Aleve).

Your doctor may have prescribed medicine to reduce stomach acid. You also may need to take antibiotics if your peptic ulcers are caused by an infection. You can help your stomach heal and keep ulcers from coming back by making some changes in your lifestyle. Quit smoking, limit caffeine and alcohol, and reduce stress.

**Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety.** Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

- Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Call your doctor if you think you are having a problem with your medicine.
- Do not take aspirin or other NSAIDs such as ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve). Ask your doctor what you can take for pain.
- Do not smoke. Smoking can make ulcers worse. If you need help quitting, talk to your doctor about stop-smoking programs and medicines. These can increase your chances of quitting for good.
- Drink in moderation or avoid drinking alcohol.
- Do not drink beverages that have caffeine if they bother your stomach. These include coffee, tea, and soda.
- Eat a balanced diet of small, frequent meals. Make an appointment with a dietitian if you need help planning your meals.
- Reduce stress. Avoid people and places that make you feel anxious, if you can. Learn ways to reduce stress, such as biofeedback, guided imagery, and meditation.

## When should you call for help?

**Call 911** anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You passed out (lost consciousness).
- You vomit blood or what looks like coffee grounds.

- You pass maroon or very bloody stools.

**Call your doctor now** or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have severe pain in your belly, back, or shoulders.
- You have new or worsening belly pain.
- You are dizzy or lightheaded, or you feel like you may faint.
- Your stools are black and tarlike or have streaks of blood.

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- You have new symptoms such as weight loss, nausea or vomiting.
- You do not feel better as expected.

## **Where can you learn more?**

Go to [www.southdenvergi.com](http://www.southdenvergi.com), log into the web portal, and enter Z086 in the search box to learn more about Peptic Ulcer Disease: After Your Visit.

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