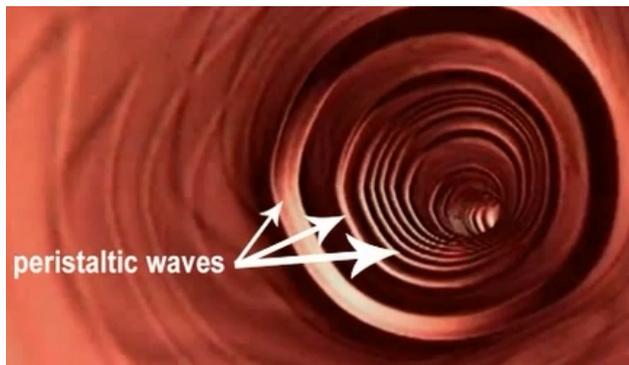


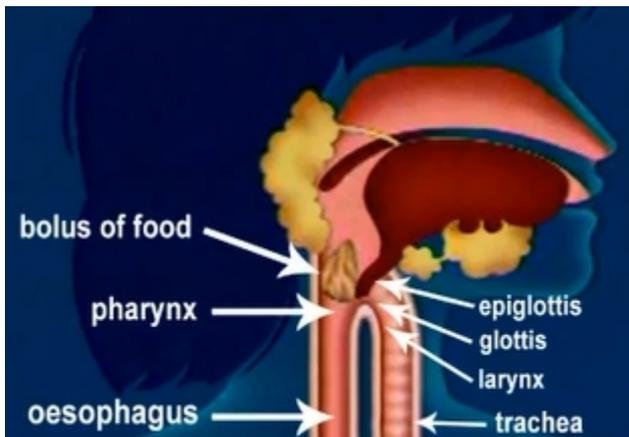
Vomiting

WHAT IS VOMITING?

When we vomit, some of the contents of the stomach are expelled by the mouth. This is a **defence mechanism** in case we swallow toxic substances. Vomiting can be manually triggered, but it is usually a reflex. This reflex first induces a feeling of nausea, or feeling sick, and then the stomach contents are expelled through an **anti-peristaltic movement**.



As mentioned previously, **peristaltic waves** are rhythmic contractions that help food move down through the digestive tract, but when we vomit, the contents of the stomach move up in the opposite direction, which is why we refer to an 'anti-peristaltic' movement.



When we swallow, the **epiglottis** turns down to block the **glottis**, which is the entrance to the larynx. There is a small leaf-shaped flap over the top of the glottis, hence the name epiglottis, from the Greek 'epi' meaning 'upon'.

When we throw up, a reflex closes the **glottis** to prevent the vomit from going into the **trachea** and then the lungs. Vomit typically contains food, along with bile and more rarely blood.

Vomiting is not the same as **regurgitation**, which is a passive action corresponding to the contents of the stomach coming back up towards the back of the throat or the oral cavity.

WHAT ARE THE CAUSES?

As with stomach aches, vomiting can be caused by various things. **Food poisoning** for example, or diseases of the digestive tract, such as a **stomach ulcer** or **gastroenteritis**, which is an inflammation of the wall of the digestive tract. Sometimes vomiting is related to balance functions inside the ear, such as motion sickness or vertigo. Side effects of certain **medication** may also trigger vomiting.

Vomiting

Vomiting is the body's defence against...

- beneficial bacteria
- toxic substances
- raw food

Vomiting empties one of our organs of part of its contents. Which organ is it?

- The colon
- The stomach
- The lungs

When we vomit, what stops liquid from entering the respiratory tract?

- The epiglottis
- The glottis
- The salivary glands

Regurgitating and vomiting are exactly the same phenomenon.

- False
- True

Regurgitation is when some of the contents of the stomach actively come back up to the back of the throat or into the buccal cavity.

- False
- True

Vomiting has many different causes.

- False
- True

Some medications may cause vomiting.

- False
- True

Illnesses of the digestive tract may cause vomiting.

- False
- True

Answers

Vomiting is the body's defence against...

beneficial bacteria

Wrong! That's not the right answer.

toxic substances

Well done! Ingesting a toxic substance may trigger vomiting.

raw food

Wrong! Try again!

Vomiting empties one of our organs of part of its contents. Which organ is it?

The colon

Wrong! By the time food reaches your colon, the only way out is via your anus.

The stomach

Well done! Vomited food comes from your stomach.

The lungs

Wrong! Your lungs contain air.

When we vomit, what stops liquid from entering the respiratory tract?

The epiglottis

Well done! A reflex movement of your epiglottis closes your glottis to protect your respiratory tract.

The glottis

Wrong! The glottis is the opening which needs to be closed.

The salivary glands

Wrong! Your salivary glands produce saliva.

Regurgitating and vomiting are exactly the same phenomenon.

False

Well done! They are two totally different phenomena.

True

Wrong! Try again!

Regurgitation is when some of the contents of the stomach actively come back up to the back of the throat or into the buccal cavity.

False

Well done! Unlike vomiting, regurgitating is a passive phenomenon.

True

Wrong! That's not the right answer.

Vomiting has many different causes.

False

Wrong! Try again!

True

Well done! Vomiting may occur for many different reasons.

Some medications may cause vomiting.

False

Wrong! Try again!

True

Well done! Some medications may have side effects, such as vomiting.

Illnesses of the digestive tract may cause vomiting.

False

Wrong! Try again!

True

Well done! Vomiting may be caused by a stomach ulcer or by gastroenteritis.
