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Hiccups

Also called: Hiccough

What are hiccups?

Have you ever wondered what is happening when you hiccup? There are two parts to a hiccup. The first is an involuntary movement of your diaphragm. The diaphragm is a muscle at the base of your lungs. It is the main muscle used for breathing. The second part of a hiccup is a quick closing of your vocal cords. This is what causes the "hic" sound you make.

What causes hiccups?

Hiccups can start and stop for no obvious reason. But they often happen when something irritates your diaphragm, such as:

- Eating too quickly
- Eating too much
- Eating hot or spicy foods
- Drinking alcohol
- Drinking carbonated drinks
- Diseases that irritate the nerves that control the diaphragm
- Feeling nervous or excited
- A bloated stomach
- Certain medicines
- Abdominal surgery
- Metabolic disorders
- Central nervous system disorders

How can I get rid of hiccups?


Hiccups usually go away on their own after a few minutes. You have probably heard different suggestions about how to cure hiccups. There is no proof that they work, but they are not harmful, so you could try them. They include:

- Breathing into a paper bag
- Drinking or sipping a glass of cold water
- Holding your breath
- Gargling with ice water


What are the treatments for chronic hiccups?

Some people have chronic hiccups. This means that the hiccups last more than a few days or keep coming back. Chronic hiccups can interfere with your sleep, eating, drinking, and talking. If you have chronic hiccups, contact your health care provider. If you have a condition that is causing the hiccups, treating that condition may help. Otherwise, treatment options include medicines, surgery, and other procedures.

Learn More

- Chronic Hiccup [<https://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/diseases/6657/chronic-hiccup/>]  (Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center)
- Hiccups [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003068.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003068.htm>]
- Hiccups [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/digestive-disorders/symptoms-of-digestive-disorders/hiccups>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/trastornos-gastrointestinales/s%C3%ADntomas-de-los-trastornos-digestivos/hipo>]
- What Causes Hiccups? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/hiccup.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/hiccup.html>]

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Hiccup [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Hiccup%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Patient-directed behavioral-physical interventions to alleviate acute hiccups associated with chemotherapy: a... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40711569>]
- Article: Experience of illness with chronic singultus: a qualitative interview study. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40121512>]
- Article: Pathogenesis and treatment of perioperative hiccups: a narrative review. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40055925>]
- Hiccups -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Hiccup%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bedat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29>]



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