



PATIENT INFORMATION ON GAVE

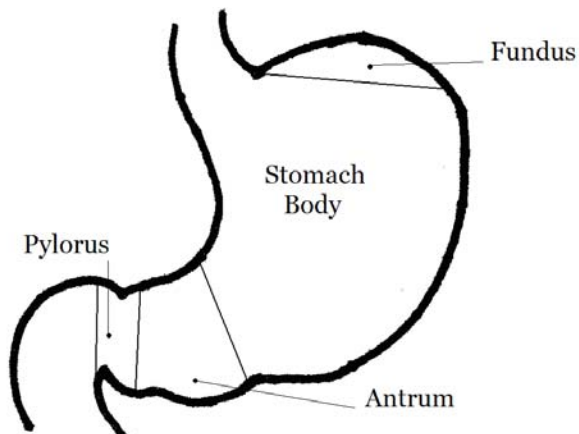
WHAT IS GAVE?

GAVE stands for:

- G**astric (stomach)
- A**ntral (lower cavity of the stomach)
- V**ascular (blood vessel)
- E**ctasia (blood vessels in dilated condition).

GAVE is a condition wherein the blood vessels in the lining of the stomach are dilated or swollen. These blood vessels are arranged in red, patchy stripes. Because of the striped appearance that looks like the pattern on a watermelon, GAVE has been labeled as Watermelon Stomach. The ectatic or dilated blood vessels can burst or erode through to the surface of the lining of the stomach, causing them to bleed.

ANATOMY OF THE STOMACH:



GAVE IMAGE:

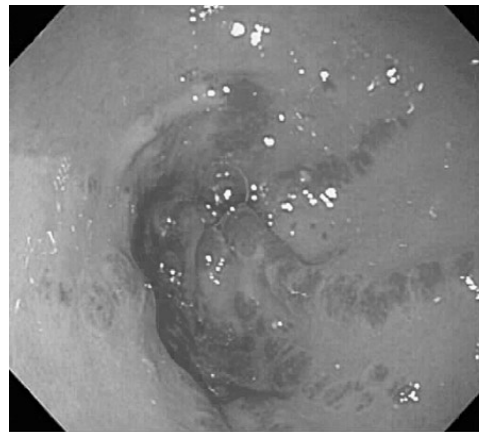


Figure from Fauci, A. S. et al. *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine. 17th edition.*

WHAT CAUSES GAVE?

The cause of GAVE is still unclear. There are conditions such as Liver Cirrhosis, Chronic Renal Failure and some Autoimmune diseases that have been associated with GAVE. GAVE occurs more frequently in females than males.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF GAVE?

- Black stools: blood in the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract such as the stomach turns black when passed in the stools. Blood in the stool turns black from exposure to the digestive juices before the stool reaches the anal canal.
- Anemia: the body does not have the optimal number of healthy red blood cells due to blood loss.

HOW IS GAVE DIAGNOSED?

GAVE is diagnosed through an upper endoscopy or EsophagoGastroDuodenoscopy (EGD). An EGD can be done as an outpatient procedure. It is a safe procedure that is usually done under conscious sedation. After putting the patient to sleep through an IV medication, a flexible scope with a light and camera at its tip is inserted through the mouth. The scope goes through the esophagus or food pipe into the stomach all the way to the duodenum or first part of the small intestine. The presence of red streaks in the antrum indicates GAVE.

HOW IS GAVE TREATED?

One or a combination of the following treatments can be used:

Coagulation: this is done with either Electrocautery or with ablation by Argon Plasma Coagulation (APC) during an EGD procedure.

- With Electrocautery, a probe directly touches the stomach lining to apply electrical heat energy to clot and destroy the blood vessel networks.
- In the case of APC probe, a high frequency electric spark is applied to a jet of argon gas. The probe is targeted towards the striped blood vessels without touching them to coagulate and seal the blood vessels and prevent bleeding.

Blood transfusion is given to restore healthy red blood cell/hemoglobin levels.

Medications

- A combination of Progesterone and Estrogen therapy may be used to control mucosal bleeding by reducing the bleeding time.
- A long-acting medicine called Octreotide (Sandostatin LAR) may be used to control bleeding by compressing or constricting the vessels. Octreotide is given monthly as an injection.

WHEN SHOULD I SEEK MEDICAL HELP?

- Contact your physician if you have black stools.
- Contact your physician if you experience symptoms of anemia such as: fatigue, pallor, weakness, dizziness, shortness of breath and chest pain.

FOLLOW-UP:

- Report your symptoms to your physician.
- Avoid excessive use of anti-inflammatory drugs such as Ibuprofen, Aleve and Aspirin because they irritate the stomach.
- Use of proton-pump inhibitors is controversial in GAVE, but they may be used short-term after endoscopic therapy.
- A series of EGD appointments (typically monthly) may be necessary for adequate endoscopic control of this disorder.