



Hiccups are simple to explain. The diaphragm (the major muscle which sits like a cap over the stomach) goes into spasms. The vocal cords close rapidly. This causes the “hiccup” sound.

Hiccups

Causes

- Eating too fast. Swallowing air with the food.
- Drinking carbonated beverages. Drinking too much alcohol.
- Doing things to make the stomach full enough to irritate the diaphragm, such as eating a lot of fatty foods in a short period of time.

Treatment

Hiccups seldom cause harm. Usually, they don’t last very long. Self-Care treats most cases of hiccups. Hiccups that persist could be a sign of a nervous system problem. A doctor needs to diagnose and treat this.

Questions to Ask

Do the hiccups occur with severe abdominal pain and spitting up blood or blood in the stools?



NO

Have hiccups lasted longer than 8 hours in an adult or 3 hours in a child? Or, have they started only after taking prescribed medicine?



NO



Self-Care / Prevention

Common Remedies for Hiccups

- Swallow 1 teaspoon of dry table sugar. If this doesn’t stop the hiccups right away, repeat it 3 times, at 2-minute intervals. **{Note:}** For young children (that do not have diabetes), use a teaspoon of corn syrup.}
- Hold your tongue with your thumb and index finger and gently pull it forward.
- Drink a glass of water rapidly. **{Note:}** Young children should drink a glass of milk slowly.}