

# GERD increases risk for idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis

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Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) increases the risk for

idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF), according to a study published online April 20 in the *European Respiratory Journal*.

Carl J. Reynolds, M.B.B.S, from the National Heart and Lung Institute at Imperial College London, and colleagues used bidirectional Mendelian randomization to examine if GERD and IPF are causally related. The analysis included 78,707 GERD cases and 288,734 controls and 4,125 IPF cases and 20,464 controls.

The researchers found that GERD increased the risk for IPF (odds ratio, 1.6; 95 percent confidence interval, 1.04 to 2.49; P = 0.032). However, there was no evidence of a causal effect of IPF on GERD risk (odds ratio, 0.999; 95 percent confidence interval, 0.997 to 1.000; P = 0.245).

"By means of a bidirectional two-sample MR study, we have overcome limitations inherent to [observational studies](#) and shown that GERD causes an increased risk of IPF, while we found no evidence that IPF causes an increased risk of GERD," the authors write. "GERD should be considered in future studies of IPF risk, and interest in it as a potential therapeutic target should be renewed. The mechanisms underlying the effect of GERD on IPF should also be investigated."

**More information:** Carl J Reynolds et al, The causal relationship between gastro-esophageal reflux disease and idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis: A bidirectional two-sample Mendelian randomization study, *European Respiratory Journal* (2023). [DOI: 10.1183/13993003.01585-2022](#)

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