5.1 Peptic Ulcers

When the mucus layer of the stomach or duodenum becomes too thin, acid can erode the cells lining these tissues. This results in a lesion known as a peptic ulcer, as shown below.

Figure 5.11 A peptic ulcer in the duodenum

The first video below illustrates how a peptic ulcer forms. The second link shows what 2 ulcers actually looks like in the stomach.

Web Links

Video: How a peptic ulcer develops (1:56)
Video: Endoscopy of 2 Giant Gastric Ulcers (0:26)

10% of Americans will develop an ulcer in their lifetime. Despite common beliefs, these ulcers are not caused by stress or spicy foods. Most ulcers are believed to be caused by the acid-resistant bacteria, *Helicobacter pylori*. 20% of people <40 years old, and 50% of people >60 years old are infected with this bacteria. *Helicobacter pylori* causes a thinning of the mucus that protects the stomach and duodenum from gastric acid. Prolonged use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, and naproxen (Aleve) are also a frequent causes of peptic ulcers. NSAIDs inhibit the production of a protective eicosanoid.

References & Links


Videos

How a peptic ulcer develops - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4bXZRgJ-1fk
Endoscopy of 2 Giant Gastric Ulcers - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncHcpzCnjGQ&feature=related