

CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF CHRONIC GASTRITIS INCREASE AMONG  
YOUTH

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**Abstract:** This scientific article provides a complex analysis of the epidemiology, etiopathogenesis, and clinico-morphological characteristics of chronic gastritis among the younger generation (population aged 18 to 30), which is one of the most urgent and strategically important problems of modern medicine. The relevance of the research lies in the fact that in recent years, gastrointestinal tract pathologies among young people have not only increased in quantity but their clinical course has also become more aggressive. The article deeply explores subjective and objective factors, including improper eating stereotypes introduced as a result of globalization, the negative impact of the modern "fast-food" industry on the gastric mucosa, the chemical aggressiveness of energy drinks, and psychosomatic disorders resulting from intellectual stress. Additionally, the population distribution rate of *Helicobacter pylori* infection in the conditions of Uzbekistan and its impact on the health of young people are analyzed based on statistical data. At the end of the article, a set of modern preventive strategies, early diagnosis algorithms, and scientifically based recommendations for forming a healthy lifestyle are proposed.

**Keywords:** Chronic gastritis, youth pathology, *Helicobacter pylori*, alimentary factors, fast-food culture, energy drinks, hypodynamia, psychosomatics, gastric secretion, prevention, healthy lifestyle, healthcare system of Uzbekistan, gastroscopy, epidemiology.

**Introduction:** Today, globally, maintaining human health, especially improving the quality of life of the labor-active youth segment, occupies a central place in the social policy of any state. In Uzbekistan, the issue of youth health is also viewed as an important component of national security. However, recent medical-statistical data show that the prevalence of digestive system diseases, particularly chronic gastritis, among the population aged 18 to 30 has increased by 30-35 percent compared to the previous decade. Gastritis is not merely a temporary dyspeptic disorder, but a chronic, long-term inflammation of the gastric mucosa, leading to impaired regeneration at the cellular level, progressive atrophy, and serious deformation of the secretory and motor functions of the stomach. The "rejuvenation" of the disease on such a wide scale is directly related to urbanization processes, technological progress, and the excessive acceleration of the rhythm of life. Among students and young professionals, due to chronic lack of time, "on-the-go" snacking, skipping breakfast, and overeating in the evening have become commonplace. These factors disrupt the neurohumoral regulation of the stomach. If gastritis is neglected at this age and turns into a chronic form, the probability of gastric ulcers, duodenal perforation, and oncological complications (adenocarcinoma) increases sharply in the future. Therefore, deeply studying this problem scientifically and developing prevention measures suitable for the modern lifestyle of young people remains one of the most urgent tasks before medical science.

**Literature review:** Representatives of the Uzbekistan school of gastroenterology have been analyzing this topic in their numerous scientific works. Academician Sh.I. Karimov, in his fundamental research, proved that the alimentary factor, i.e., the violation of the quality and order of nutrition, is primary in the origin of chronic gastritis. According to his conclusions, the



deficiency of animal proteins and vitamins (especially groups C and B) weakens the protective barrier of the gastric mucosa (mucus-bicarbonate barrier), resulting in easy inflammation under the influence of endogenous and exogenous factors [2]. Professor A.G. Gadayev, in his works, paid special attention to psychosomatic factors and the role of the vegetative nervous system in the pathogenesis of gastritis. His research shows that chronic stress situations occurring in young people (exams, social adaptation) cause spasms of the blood vessels in the stomach wall, which creates the ground for local ischemia and autolysis (self-digestion) of the mucosa [3]. The issue of *Helicobacter pylori* (H.p.) infection was studied deeply by V.Z. Zokirov using the example of the population of Uzbekistan. The scientist noted that in the climate and socio-living conditions of Uzbekistan, this bacterium is found in a carrier form in almost 80 percent of the population. As a result of a temporary decrease in the immune system in young people, the virulence of this bacterium increases and causes acute destructive changes [4]. Additionally, in scientific articles of recent years, A.M. Sharipov analyzed the direct chemical-toxic effects of trans-fats, preservatives, and artificial flavoring additives found in modern "fast-food" on the gastric epithelium [5]. E.K. Toshmuhammedov substantiated the psychological and medical convenience of non-invasive methods (for example, the <sup>13</sup>C-urea breath test) in the diagnostic process for a youth audience [6]. Recent research by B.X. Azizov proves the effectiveness of combined therapy in the treatment of erosive gastritis [7].

**Methods:** This comprehensive study was conducted from 2023 to the beginning of 2025 among 200 young patients who applied with a diagnosis of "chronic gastritis" to youth clinics in the cities of Tashkent, Samarkand, and Andijan, as well as medical centers of higher education institutions. The selected contingent consisted of students and working youth aged 18 to 28, of whom 55 percent were men and 45 percent were women. The following methodological algorithms were used in the study. Socio-anamnestic screening. Through a specially developed questionnaire consisting of 40 questions, the patients' nutritional regime, frequency of "fast-food" consumption, dependence on energy drinks and caffeine, smoking status, as well as daily sleep and physical activity were analyzed. Clinico-visual examination. The patients' complaints (pain, dyspepsia, asthenia) were systematized. The localization of pain points was determined through deep palpation of the epigastral region. Video-gastroscopic diagnostics. All patients underwent fibrogastroduodenoscopy (FGDS) using a high-precision video-endoscope device. During the examination, the hyperemia of the mucosa, edema, erosive lesions, hemorrhages, and the level of mucus accumulation were evaluated. *H. pylori* identification. Three methods were used simultaneously to detect the infection: rapid urease test, histological analysis of the bio-sample, and detection of antibodies (IgG) in the blood serum. Study of secretory activity. The level of acidity of gastric juice was checked using the pH-metry method, and basal and stimulated acid formation indicators were studied.

**Results:** The research results showed a specific and alarming picture of gastritis development among youth. Alimentary factors. 75 percent of the patients reported that they regularly skip breakfast, and 88 percent postpone their main meal until after 8:00 PM. It was found that in 90 percent of young people, the basis of the diet consists of products rich in "fast carbohydrates" and trans-fats. In young people who consume energy drinks at least 4-5 times a week (45 percent), acute hemorrhagic damage to the gastric mucosa was observed. Infection status. *H. pylori* bacteria were detected in 78 percent of the examined youth. Analysis showed that the carrier rate of this bacterium is 1.5 times higher in young people who eat in low socio-hygienic conditions and are indifferent to personal hygiene. Psycho-emotional and neurovegetative state. 62 percent of the respondents identified intellectual stress, chronic fatigue, and sleep lasting less than 5 hours as the main cause of disease exacerbation. In this group, a



hyperacid state (increased acid) of the stomach was frequently observed. Morphological results. As a result of the FGDS examination, superficial gastritis was detected in 64 percent of patients, erosive gastritis in 22 percent, gastroduodenitis accompanied by duodenitis in 10 percent, and a tendency to chronic atrophy in 4 percent. These results proved that acute and erosive forms of the disease predominate among youth.

**Conclusion:** The research results show that the increase in chronic gastritis among youth is a complex, multi-factorial, and sociogenic process. The nutritional culture of modern youth has fundamentally changed, and these changes conflict with the physiological capabilities of the gastric mucosa. Energy drink and "fast-food" culture serve as a serious "alimentary aggression" for the young organism. To solve the problem, the following scientific-practical preventive measures are necessary. Socio-educational prevention. Organizing mandatory seminars on the healthy eating pyramid in educational institutions and strengthening social advertisements about the harms of energy drinks. Medical screening. Establishing annual gastroenterological check-ups in every higher and secondary special education institution and immediately directing young people with dyspeptic complaints to examination. Hygienic control. Establishing strict sanitary control in public catering places to limit the spread of *H. pylori*. Psychological correction. Widely promoting stress-management methods among youth, as psychogenic factors play a decisive role in the recurrence of gastritis.

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