**Mayo Clinic Minute**

**What causes hiccups?**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>AUDIO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faking hiccups is pretty easy.</td>
<td><em>Sound of a child pretending to hiccup</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting rid of the real ones can be difficult.</td>
<td><em>Sound of a different child pretending to hiccup.</em></td>
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**Title:**
Mark V. Larson, M.D.  
Gastroenterology  
Mayo Clinic

**“It’s all an involuntary contraction of the diaphragm, followed by closure of the vocal cords that leads to that characteristic sound.”**

Gastroenterologist Dr. Mark Larson says most hiccup triggers are associated with temporary bloating of the stomach.

**Mark V. Larson, M.D.**  
“That might be overeating or rapidly eating.”

**Graphic:**
**Hiccup triggers**  
**Overeating**  
**Carbonated beverages**  
**Being excited or scared**

He says gulping down big drinks – especially carbonated ones – can cause hiccups. Even being suddenly excited or scared can cause that repetitive involuntary contraction of the diaphragm.

**Mark V. Larson, M.D.**  
“That may be a clue that there is an underlying medical condition.”

**Mark V. Larson, M.D.**  
“As for halting the hiccups, …

**Mark V. Larson, M.D.**  
“…do something that interrupts the activity of the diaphragm.”

Dr. Larson suggests simple remedies, such as holding your breath, gargling or simply sipping on cold water.

For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Jeff Olsen.