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# Chris Kresser

LET'S TAKE BACK YOUR HEALTH — *Starting Now.*

## How your antacid drug is making you sick (Part A)

🕒 on APRIL 10, 2010

👤 by CHRIS KRESSER

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*Note: this is the fourth article in a series about heartburn and GERD. If you haven't done so already, you'll want to read [Part I](#), [Part II](#) and [Part III](#) before reading this article.*



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Believe it or not, stomach acid isn't there just to punish you for eating Indian food. Acid is in the stomach because it's supposed to be there. It is found in all vertebrates. And while it isn't necessary for life, it is certainly required for health.

Most people have no idea how many vital roles stomach acid plays in our bodies. Such misunderstanding is perpetuated by drug companies who continue to insist that stomach acid is not essential. Meanwhile, millions of people around the world are taking acid suppressing drugs that not only fail to address the underlying causes of heartburn and GERD, but put them at risk of serious (and even life-threatening) conditions.

There are four primary consequences of acid stopping drugs:

1. Increased bacterial overgrowth
2. Impaired nutrient absorption
3. Decreased resistance to infection
4. Increased risk of cancer and other diseases

I had originally intended to cover all four of these issues in this article, but as I started to write I realized it would be far too long. So I will cover increased bacterial overgrowth and impaired nutrient absorption in this article, and decreased resistance to infection and increased risk of cancer and other diseases in the next article.

### A stomach full of germs

We're not going to spend much time on this here since the connection between low stomach acid and bacterial overgrowth was the focus of [Part II](#) and [Part III](#).

To review, low stomach acid causes bacterial overgrowth in the stomach and other parts of the intestine. Bacterial overgrowth causes maldigestion of carbohydrates, which in turn produces gas. This gas increases the pressure in the stomach, causing the lower esophageal sphincter (LES) to malfunction. The malfunction of the LES allows acid from the stomach to enter the esophagus, thus producing the symptoms of heartburn and GERD.

Bacterial overgrowth has a number of other undesirable effects, including reducing nutrient absorption, increasing inflammation, and raising the risk of stomach cancer. Studies have confirmed that proton-pump inhibitors (PPIs) can profoundly alter the gastrointestinal bacterial population by suppressing stomach acid. Researchers in Italy detected small bowel bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) in 50% of patients using PPIs, compared to only 6% of healthy control subjects. The prevalence of SIBO increased after one year of treatment with PPIs.

## Well-fed but undernourished

Stomach acid is a prerequisite to healthy digestion. The breakdown and absorption of nutrients occurs at an optimum rate only within a narrow range of acidity in the stomach. If there isn't enough acid, the normal chemical reactions required to absorb nutrients is impaired. Over time this can lead to diseases such as anemia, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, depression, and more.

## Macronutrients

Stomach acid plays a key role in the digestion of protein, carbohydrates and fat. When food is eaten, the secretion of stomach acid (HCL) triggers the production of pepsin. Pepsin is the enzyme required to digest protein. If HCL levels are depressed, so are pepsin levels. As a result, proteins don't get broken down into their component amino acids and peptides. This can lead to a deficiency of essential amino acids, which in turn may lead to chronic depression, anxiety and insomnia.

At the same time, proteins that escape digestion by pepsin may end up in the bloodstream. Since this is not supposed to happen, the body reacts to these proteins as if they were foreign invaders, causing allergic and autoimmune responses. I'll discuss this more below.

## Micronutrients

We can eat the most nutritious diet imaginable, packed with vitamins, minerals and other essential nutrients, but if we aren't absorbing those nutrients we won't benefit from them.

As acid declines and the pH of the stomach increases, absorption of nutrients becomes impaired. Decades of research have confirmed that low stomach acid – whether it occurs on its own or as a result of using antacid drugs – reduces absorption of several key nutrients such as iron, B12, folate, calcium and zinc.

## Iron

Iron deficiency causes chronic anemia, which means that the body's tissues are literally starving for oxygen.

In one study, 35 of 40 people (80 percent) with chronic iron-deficiency anemia were found to have below normal acid secretion. Iron-deficiency anemia is a well-known consequence of surgical procedures that remove the regions of the stomach where acid is produced.

Researchers have found that inhibition of acid secretion by Tagamet, a popular acid stopping drug, resulted in a significant reduction of iron. At the same time, studies have shown that adding acid has improved iron absorption in patients with achlorhydria (no stomach acid production).

## B12

Vitamin B12 (cobalamin) is needed for normal nerve activity and brain function. B12 enters the body bound to animal-derived proteins. In order for use to absorb it, the vitamin molecules must first be separated from these proteins with the help of – you guessed it – stomach acid.

If stomach acid is low, B12 can't be separated from its carrier proteins and thus won't be absorbed. In one [study](#) of 359 people aged 69-79 years with serious atrophic gastritis, a disease characterized by low stomach acid, more than 50 percent had low vitamin B12 levels.

A number of studies have examined the negative effect of PPI therapy on B12 absorption. In a [study](#) on healthy subjects treated with 20 mg and 40 mg of Prilosec per day for two weeks, B12 absorption was reduced by 72% and 88% respectively.

## Folate

Among other things, folate (folic acid) is vital for keeping the cardiovascular system healthy and for preventing certain birth defects. Low stomach acid levels can interfere with folate absorption by raising the pH in the small intestine. At the same time, when folate is given to achlorhydric patients (with no stomach acid) along with an HCL supplement, absorption of the vitamin [increases by 54 percent](#).

Both Tagamet and Zantac reduced folate absorption in [another study](#), though the reduction in the Zantac group was not statistically significant. The overall reduction of folate absorption was sixteen percent. This modest reduction is probably not enough to harm a healthy person consuming adequate levels of folate, but it may cause problems in those with folate deficiency (relatively common) or other health problems.

## Calcium

Calcium makes our bones and teeth strong and is responsible for hundreds, if not thousands, of other functions in our body. The importance of stomach acid in the absorption of calcium has been known since the 1960s, when one group of researchers [noted](#) that some ulcer patients were barely absorbing any calcium at all (just 2 percent). When they investigated they found that these subjects had a high gastric pH (6.5) and very little stomach acid. However, when the researchers gave them HCL supplements, lowering the pH to 1, calcium absorption rose five-fold.

## Zinc

Zinc takes part in several metabolic processes related to keeping cell membranes stable, forming new bone, immune defense, night vision, and tissue growth. In one [controlled trial](#), Tagamet treatment reduced zinc absorption by about 50 percent. Another [study](#) found that Pepcid, which raises intragastric pH to over 5, had the same effect.

Although there is little systemic research on the absorption of other nutrients, there is good reason to believe that low acid levels may also effect levels of vitamin A, vitamin E, thiamine (vitamin B1), riboflavin (vitamin B2), and niacin (vitamin B3). Theoretically, the absorption of any nutrient that is bound to protein will be inhibited ([PDF](#)).

In [Part B](#) of this article I will explain how acid stopping drugs decrease our resistance to infection and increase our risk of stomach cancer and other diseases.

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## Comments

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**Peter**

MARCH 28, 2017 AT 9:56 PM

One surprising side effect of PPI's and H2 Blockers that has not been addressed in this article is insomnia. As far as I am aware it is not mentioned on any of the side effect profiles in the leaflets enclosed with the tablets, however I have experienced insomnia after taking both forms of the acid suppression medication, and after attending a nurse lead gastro clinic they did confirm that insomnia has been complained about by other sufferers also.

Reply

**Kristina**

MARCH 11, 2017 AT 1:40 AM

My gallbladder was removed 23 years ago, and I've had reflux pretty much ever since. I've had an endoscopy which showed no hiatal hernia and normal acid levels, plus negative H Pylori tests. My gastroenterologist believes I'm actually having bile reflux, and that there's no remedy for it. Suggestions?

Reply

**Sarah gamble**

MARCH 1, 2017 AT 12:41 PM

After of 6 years on nexium, almost 3 weeks ago I stopped cold turkey. The first week was incredible! I thought for sure simply stopping it had cured my excessive belching problem. But after a week reality set in, terrible acid. I felt my stomach filling up with acid all day every day. I got Zantac to take when things got bad and I made my diet very strict—bananas, salad with parsley and other non acid veggies—that's all. Since stopping the nexium I have been very constipated, I use milk of magnesia to relieve that but it causes me terrible acid about 3 hours after I take it. Also, like most things, I can't take any form of probiotic, it causes terrible acid that will last days before settling down.

Will I ever get back to normal? Am I just destined to be on a PPI the rest of my life. I really don't want to start taking it again. I'm always fearful I will get sick and need an antibiotic or fever reducer—which would cause acid so severe is have to go to the ER. Please help:(

Reply

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**Ginny**  
MARCH 2, 2017 AT 6:46 PM

Hi Sarah,

Why were you put on it to start with?

Reply

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**Tim Dusen**  
JANUARY 20, 2017 AT 5:32 AM

I have a sphincter valve which is stuck open, so as a result, unknowing of the problem for years, I now have stage2 esophagitis as a result of stomach acid entering my esophagus. I don't like taking an acid blocker, but what is the alternative? I know all the problems associated with blocking the acid, but with the only alternative is one that leads to cancer of the esophagus, what are my options?

Reply

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**Linda**  
FEBRUARY 13, 2018 AT 4:36 PM

Why didn't anyone answer your question on what to do for esophagitis?

Reply

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**Josue A. Roman**  
AUGUST 20, 2016 AT 2:13 PM

It is very true that many internet sites can not be trust; but is important to be open minded when researching. For those that believe only MD professionals see the following articles by MD and other professionals supporting this article (<http://www.everydayhealth.com/digestive-health/experts-are-heartburn-medications-safe.aspx>).

Just recently (3 days), I was for first time visiting a Chiropractor, and she advised me against the use of long term antiacids. She explain that there are a number of research done and to do some research myself. My personal doctor touch the subject lightly in the pass, but did not explain well. I was diagnose with arthritis by a military doctor near 10 years ago and he prescribe Meloxicam for the pains and Omeprazole 20mg to prevent stomach problems. I just stop the Omeprazole and will take it as need it for now as my plan moving forward. The last few years I been prescribe Vitamin D for deficiency, and I wonder if it is due to the antiacid. I have a very good diet that includes fruits, vegetables and various nuts, and spend a good time of the day under the sun. So why would I have vitamin D deficiency?

By the way, the FDA also agree in the dangers of long term antiacids.

Reply

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**Josue A. Roman**  
AUGUST 20, 2016 AT 2:11 PM

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By the way, the FDA also agree in the dangers of long term antiacids.

Reply

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## **Louise**

**JUNE 27, 2016 AT 2:55 AM**

I have just weaned myself off PPIs finally after 6-7 yrs. I am 40 years of age. it's been about 5 weeks since my last tablet. How long would it take for my system to get back to normal and absorbing nutrients properly again. I suffer from anxiety and memory and concentration problems so would like to know how long approx it would take before I notice improvements. Would it be months or closer to a year? I'm trying to have kefir every day and fermented sauerkraut a couple of days a week too to help heal my stomach and acid levels. Any input would be greatly appreciated. Thanks!

Reply

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## **Lusina**

**JUNE 28, 2016 AT 1:00 AM**

Hi Louise!

Well it's been about 3 months that I quit on my drugs. And step by step my health improves. At first I have had poignant feeling in my mouth, lots of heartburn, etc, but all that is gone now. I suggest that you use apple after every meal, which has to be small, with some vegetables. I have also taken vitamins, because I was out of them since taking PPI-s. Apple worked just great for me and I really appreciate those people here who suggested it to me. In my country we use honey a lot! So if you have a chance, I would also recommend that you drink a water + 1 little spoon of domestic honey. And after 40 minutes you can start your breakfast. Good luck

Reply

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## **Louise**

**JUNE 28, 2016 AT 2:11 AM**

Thank you Lusina! Yes I have used Braggs apple cider vinegar at times and that has helped too. Will try your suggestions. Did you have brain fog too? I worry I am getting early dementia... But I think I could possibly be b12 deficient (which can cause memory issues and poor concentration etc) from taking ppis for extended time

Reply

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## **Christina**

**JUNE 21, 2016 AT 12:06 PM**

I had my appendix out 2 years ago and have suffered from stomach pain, and a small bowel obstruction ever since. I haven't been able to tolerate foods like apples, almonds, coconut milk, apple cider vinegar, and the healthy gut-healing bone broth since after the appendectomy. They really tear my stomach apart and the pain feels like a lot of pressure that has sent me to the ER several times. I had an upper endoscopy recently that revealed esophagitis so I've been put on a PPI. Why would I not be able to tolerate these healthy foods? I never had a problem consuming them in the past. A low-FODMAP diet seems to help my stomach pain level, but it's not helping to treat my underlying problem...thank you for your tips! I've read that ACV is good for digestion but I cannot handle even a tsp without immense pain.

Reply

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## **Donna**

**FEBRUARY 3, 2017 AT 10:17 PM**

Get checked for h pylori a bacterial infection. My stomach had pain for two years and I ended up in emergency only to find out that my doctor could have found out by a simple blood test. All doctors know about it but will not mention it treatment is antibiotics. Ask for test

Reply

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## **Cindy**

**JUNE 6, 2016 AT 9:00 AM**

If anyone is taking Zantac, can you please comment on whether or not it has depressed your appetite?

Reply

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## **Choymae Huie**

**MAY 15, 2016 AT 9:04 PM**

Fermented vegetables will solve the whole issue. My friend gave me some kimchi and I had it with dinner. No belching at all that night, and the skin condition I had around my eye, I suspect from a systemic fungal infection caused by too many bouts of antibiotic, (another hellish drug from the pharmaceutical company) also healed that night. So this article is right on, THANKS CHRIS, about the problem being that our good bacteria is destroyed and the remedy is to reseed it with fermented foods.

Reply

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## **claudia drake**

**MAY 13, 2016 AT 7:46 PM**

I am taking Acyclovir, an anti-viral med, Meloxicam, an anti-inflammatory med, and Famotidine (or any H2 Blocker). The H2 Blocker is supposed to keep the first two meds from being absorbed by the stomach—to be passed into the intestine to be absorbed there to work better. So, 1) would that work to make the meds be absorbed in the intestine—and would that do any good., and 2) am I doing any harm by using the H2 Blocker constantly—possibly by not letting food, etc., be absorbed in my intestine?

Reply

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## **Katrina**

**MARCH 23, 2016 AT 8:38 PM**

Hello,

About 6 months ago my husband rushed me to the hospital because I was in th worst pain I had ever felt (besides childbirth, but on par with it) in my upper abdomen. I was only two weeks post-partum so we had no clue what it could be. After three days in the ER and having had what seemed like every test under the sun they finally did an upper endoscopy and found two large stomach ulcers (not the bleeding type). The GI dr prescribed Protonix but it was giving me stomach cramps and diarrhea so she switched it to rantidine (zantac) 150 mg once daily. After a couple months my heartburn got worse so I've been taking it twice daily. Now the past week or so I have been getting very lightheaded and feeling so exhausted! Could this be anemia caused by the antacid? Also, how do i detox from the antacid? Should i stop cold turkey?

Thank you!!

Reply

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**Katrina**

**MARCH 23, 2016 AT 8:45 PM**

Sorry forgot to mention some things. I am only 21 years old and otherwise very healthy. I do struggle with Candida issues though....Ive been learning recently that candida and gut issues are related. The doctor thought my ulcers had been caused by all the NSAIDS i had been taling in those two weeks after giving birth. I was taking them for uterine cramping and back pain. However i had very severe heartbearn while i was pregnant and was wondering if the ulcers could have already been forming and perhaps the NSAIDS just irritated them?

Reply

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**Donna**

**FEBRUARY 3, 2017 AT 10:24 PM**

You need to be eraticated from h pylori bacterial infection. Get blood drawn to see if your positive. Ulcers are from h pylori. Eradicate with high doses of anitibitoc the doctor didn't tell me after two years of horrible pain. Had to find out at the hospital. Better now

Reply

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**Angie Sutton**

**MARCH 18, 2016 AT 6:27 PM**

My mom has coughed and coughed till she throws up. They thought acid reflux and asthma. Now I cough and cough. When I do people think I am sneezing. I cough till I gag. It's like I have phlegm in my throat or for no reason I just start coughing. I have been on Prilosec and changed my eating habits. I have been coughing like this for 4 years. Using Prilosec for 2-3 years. I went off Prilosec and ate better for months but still coughed till I gagged. I have been to numerous doctors as well as my mom has. They put a thing down my throat and saw scars on it. I can't find anyone that knows that this is and I don't want to live with this constant cough for another 20 years. Any one else with this problem. My mom also has bone issues and I have heard Prilosec isn't good for bones.

Reply

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**John**

**APRIL 21, 2016 AT 7:45 AM**

Your coughing is more than likely caused by something you're eating. I start to cough and produce phlegm anytime I eat dairy or gluten containing products.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**APRIL 26, 2016 AT 6:25 PM**

Same here. If I eat dairy or grain I cough and cough and clear my throat over and over. So annoying. Also, grain makes my heart race. Weird, huh?

Reply

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**Rayburn Loewen**  
**APRIL 24, 2016 AT 9:13 AM**

Hi, I'm most definitely not a doctor but have experienced the phlegm and use omeprazol every day, but have heard from doctors about what all causes the phlegm. Things like milk, meats and sinus, so I guess you could check out that and see if diminished phlegm helps at all.

Reply

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**Pam Green**  
**MAY 15, 2016 AT 2:47 AM**

Have your pancreas checked out... It may be connected... I had all the same problems plus... Throwing up for no reason and fast... They found a Non cancerous tumor in the middle of my pancreas purely by the Symtom and pain... They found it by mistake... It's just a simple sonagram or MRI... Check it out !!

Reply

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**Choymae Huie**  
**MAY 16, 2016 AT 10:59 AM**

I never go to doctors except for my annual check up which is free because I have medicare. Otherwise, I'd never go. Everything they prescribe has a negative side effect to it. From all the health practitioners that I do respect, I read that fermented foods help digest your food and balances your gut flora. I use to make homemade sauerkraut and never had this acid reflux problem, but an herbalist told me that fermented foods have nitrates in it, even the homemade ones, using only regular salt turns into nitrates, so I stopped eating them. Then I met a Korean woman who gave me some homemade kimchi. I noticed that she was very energetic and alert, so nitrates or not, I ate the kimchi and had no belching at all through the night and I slept a full 8 hours without needing to get up to pee. Thank you for the suggestion, but I definitely would not go to a doctor looking for a possible problem, especially cancer if I have no symptoms.

Reply

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**Dale Doeller**

**MAY 16, 2016 AT 4:58 PM**

If you take any drugs for high blood pressure, they can be causing the cough -Seriously!  
I had a cough like that many years ago when exposed to buckwheat flour (worked in a pancake house) and it nearly killed me. I would cough and cough until vomiting. My weight dropped to 85 lbs. I went to military doctors 9 times!! All they did was prescribe cough medicine. I was incredibly weak. Finally went to a private doctor. I had to quit my job and was prescribed strong antihistamines and rest. The cough stopped immediately and I slowly regained strength and weight. Here it is 45 years later and I have a severe gluten and wheat allergy, and am lactose intolerant, but no cough. It's either blood pressure meds or you are allergic to something. Check it out.

Reply

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**Beth**

**JUNE 1, 2016 AT 9:14 AM**

I coughed for years until i started taking zertec d they told me had acid reflux cough now i cough a little but nothing like the years of gagging and coughing

Reply

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**Tandi Caldwell**

**JULY 5, 2016 AT 7:59 PM**

This sounds very much like a parasite issue. Parasites can actually affect the lungs, and frequently one family member can infect another. Most mainstream doctors do not even test for this, so I would suggest you ask for testing or begin researching at [huldaclark.com](http://huldaclark.com) and various Facebook groups with knowledgeable admins. Good luck.

Reply

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**Brenda**

**JULY 18, 2016 AT 11:35 AM**

Coughing can also be bronchiectasis. I was just diagnosed. It can be caused by GERD.

Reply

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**Lusina**

**MARCH 18, 2016 AT 11:41 AM**

Dear all! Now I can surely say, I have overcome my reflux, for which I am very happy. There is no any difficult cure and one thing is obvious – the doctors really fool us and just keeping us on meds – PPI and antacids. I too took esomeprazol 40mg, antacid gaviscon, a very strict diet for a year, which basically made my reflux worse and worse. I began having more heartburn, more discomfort in my throat and a strange taste in my mouth and etc. Finally I decided just to quite my meds and while finding this site 4 months ago, I changed the way I lived before.

First of all we have to understand, that Dr Kesser is right – heartburn is because of LOW HCL and stomach acid, so the stomach doesn't produce as much acid as needed and it throws back the food in it with some acid, which cause the heartburn. So the main thing is to make stomach work properly and to produce a normal amount of HCL and enzymes.

The 1st thing I did – I started to drink a cup of honey-water, its 1 cup of water+1 spoon honey (just an ordinary domestic honey), and the country I live it's a cultural thing to use honey in medicine. It's just has to be a cold mixture, not hot, as they say the cold honey-water makes stomach produce stomach acid, and the hot vice versa.

The second thing – I really started to pay attention on the amount of my food – I have to say that my last doctor who helped me a lot with this, advised to eat everything I like, but in low amounts, to eat 4-5 times, every 3 hours, and the last meal should be 3 hours before sleeping. Every time I eat any “dangerous” thing, I also eat 1 apple, and it decreases the heartburn. I don’t know if others practice the apple, but it greatly helps me till today.

The third thing is to relax! It’s veryyyy very important that a person with GERD practice relaxation. I do meditation, breathing exercises before sleep, and just telling myself that I am healthy and that my stomach just didn’t know it yet, but it has to improve itself :) it’s funny but helps. You have to find what’s best for you, but meditation is wonderful for me!

And the last but not the least is WATER! – Drinking water is very important. However, it’s more important to drink it in a right way- 1 hour before meal and min. 1,5 hour after. And consider the water as another little meal.

Just quit the meds, they do not help, they really make GERD worse. Good luck

Reply

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**Ginny**

**MARCH 22, 2016 AT 4:44 PM**

Hi Lusina, so glad you found what worked! I also use apples to help with digestion. Also honey is good for wounds, coughs, and digestion. I think with honey, like apples, it’s the fructose which speeds the emptying time of the stomach. Correct me if I’m wrong.

Reply

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**Lusina**

**MARCH 31, 2016 AT 2:25 AM**

Yes Ginny, I suppose apples have fructose which help and ascorbic acid. Both of them really help with digestion. As we all know the heartburn occurs, because the stomach can’t properly digest the food, and because digestive juices are not effectively produced. And apples, honey, peppermint gums, ginger, fennel, etc come to help. I am not a doctor, but these products really help me with my reflux. Hope you all find what works for you!

Reply

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**Fred**

**MARCH 27, 2016 AT 9:20 PM**

I’m very interested in this thread! I’ve dealt with heartburn issues since I was a child... used to throw up at night sometimes because of it, though at the time neither I nor my parents knew what it was. As an adult I have used Tums often, and for the past 3 or 4 years have been taking Zantac every night before bed. It seems to keep the heartburn issue at bay most of the time, but I’m concerned about negative effects it may have on my health cumulatively. I’ve never heard about drinking honey water, but I will try that. I’ve tried apple cider vinegar in the past, but my ENT/voice doctor strongly discouraged that, saying that it would exacerbate the problem rather than help. Thoughts?

Reply

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**Brian Lopez**

**AUGUST 4, 2016 AT 10:16 AM**

Hi there. I have a question, what exactly does the honey with water help with?

Reply

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**Brian Lopez**  
AUGUST 4, 2016 AT 10:21 AM

Hi there. I have a question, how exactly does the honey with water help? Does it help the body absorb nutrients better?

Reply

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**Abe**  
MARCH 17, 2016 AT 2:29 PM

I was taking 20mg of omeprazole daily. After about 6 months, I became chronically fatigued, and began having regular regurgitation episodes, mostly at night. Everything would come up on me including stomach contents as well as bile. Despite sleeping fully propped up, nighttime episodes grew increasingly regular and more dangerous as I would aspirate fluids. At that point, I completely discontinued the omeprazole. The regurgitation took many months to subside, and gradually ceased. I was PPI free and regurgitation free for 2 years, during which time I attempted to control my GERD via other non-prescription means, with only moderate success.

I then started on 40mg of pantoprazole daily. Within 7 short days, I had a horrific nighttime regurgitation episode that nearly choked me to death. Again, I stopped cold turkey.

My gastroenterologist still refuses to believe that the regurgitation has anything at all to do with the PPIs, despite the fact that it never happens otherwise.

The problem as I see it is that MDs are basically indoctrinated. They only believe what they're told to believe. If regurgitation is not a listed side effect in the pharmaceutical pamphlet, then it's not real as far as they're concerned. There is little room, time or energy for creativity in their profession. 90% of what they do involves dispensing prescriptions.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
MARCH 19, 2016 AT 9:10 AM

Wow! I'd get another GI doctor STAT! Amazing how they dismiss plain evidence, isn't it? And scary! They contradict their very first oath which is "do no harm".

I too got off prevacid and like you it took months for the reflux and heartburn pain to subside, but it did, slowly.

I've found that lying on my back with 2 pillows under my head is much better than turning on my side. Side lying, for me either left or right (but especially right), ensures I will have reflux. Probiotics help with the heart burn too. I take Dr. Ophira's which doesn't have to be refrigerated.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
MARCH 19, 2016 AT 9:10 AM

Damn auto-correct! It is Dr. OHHIRA's, not Ophira.

Reply

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**Dawn**  
**MARCH 19, 2016 AT 8:46 PM**

In my experience I have been very ill since starting Prevacid and nexium. Was on it for many yrs as stated in my other post. I still wasn't feeling well after stopping . So requested another colonoscopy and thank god I did . I learned that my large intestines grew enormous polyops 7 of them. Blocking my ileocecal valve causing a blockage . I never had this problem before taking this medication and I will never take again. I have been struggling many yrs . After they removed I was rush to hospital for severe hemorrhage in June 2015 be very careful on these medications not good to take for yrs could cause complications and polyops . Now today I feel 90 % better no pain at all. I eat healthy and follow up with colonoscopy. Very scary experiance .

Reply

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**Thi Nguyen**  
**MARCH 19, 2016 AT 9:54 PM**

Ginny, I don't know with your casebook Esomeprazole-Mag does help me a lot. My belching, heartburn, registration at night reduced to nearly normal. Of course I also use diet free of alcohol, caffeine, spicy, fizzy drink and put under my bed two bricks and three pillows. Diet and med must go together. Have you tried Nexium the original ones? You better ask doctor for Nexium and tried for a month and see how it goes. My doc described me something similar to Zantac it doesn't work and I have to go back to Zantac combine with Nexium. Zantac at night and Nexium at breakfast. Each individual is different.All the best.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**APRIL 26, 2016 AT 6:35 PM**

Hi Thi!

Actually I never get heartburn any more unless I eat something I know I shouldn't, like sugar or pasteurized milk or grain and especially wheat. Those things always get me. But lately I've been on a wonderful probiotic that has really helped my digestion plus some basic enzymes. I feel like a normal person when I take those. I still have to watch what I eat but I don't have to be quite as particular as before. And the good thing is, there are no side effects with the probiotics and enzymes. There are tons with any PPI and they are dangerous. I hope you can find relief in a more natural and less pharmaceutical way like I have! Take care!

Reply

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**Thi Nguyen**  
**APRIL 26, 2016 AT 7:14 PM**

Hi Ginny,  
I have been taking probiotic for years. Now it seems doesn't work. I have had episodes of cramps

under belly or pelvis area. I have had diarrhoea. I went to doctor and she thinks I may have colon cancer. Scary though. I had it before so don't know what is going on. About my reflux, it seems gone not totally but I don't need three pillows, two is enough now. I gain some weight which I am happy. Still taking probiotic and bean from time to time. I can't find any good probiotic even I used the ones for the infant, not really effective. I wonder what brand do you have ?THANKS

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**MAY 3, 2016 AT 6:31 PM**

Hi Thi, I'm having a moment of dejavu, lol, because I think I already posted the answer once. But who knows....I may have dreamed it! So this may be a double post, but better twice than none at all. I use Dr. Ohhira's Probiotic, Original Formula, which I got at the health food store. I've heard you can order it online directly from Dr. Ohhira's website. They also say they can't guarantee the potency if you order through Amazon.

I also started taking digestive enzymes about 2 weeks ago. It's really helped! I take one with each meal to help digest food. Before I started taking them, I felt like food just stayed in my stomach too long. It helps me be more regular as well! Hope this helps!

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**MAY 3, 2016 AT 6:34 PM**

Thi, one more thing. I initially started taking Dr. Ohhira's only once a day because a 30 day supply costs \$60 plus tax. The directions say twice a day but I only took once to save money. It works better to take it twice a day.

Reply

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**Thi Nguyen**  
**MAY 3, 2016 AT 6:50 PM**

Hi Ginny,

I will look for that brand. It is very expensive I guess. Thanks

Reply

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**Rayburn Loewen**  
**APRIL 24, 2016 AT 9:36 AM**

You know, here in Brazil we have a test that's called Orthomolecular, and tests you for thousands of symptoms and all, I believe it exists in the US, it's totally non intrusive will actually tell even how much body mass, oxygen, water content, and thousands of other things. I did it because of other symptoms other than my reflux or hiatal hernia, and discovered something as weird as that I was pre diabetic simply because of a parasite that was destroying my pancreas so it wasn't producing insulin, 2 boxes of pills for that and I'm free of the parasite, but mainly the dr. said that the reflux and h. hernia

were all a result of other organs being off frequency and thus causing the reflux problem, and that it wasn't just a "fix the reflux problem alone and you're good", situation. I'm sure everyone here already knows this but for easing the symptoms and helping it to heal, and this actually helps me even though I continue to use Omeprazol 20m, is no foods or liquids after 6:00 pm, no acidic fruits like lemons or oranges, no fries or fried foods, and like was mentioned by Lusina earlier, drink around an hour before a meal and the only 1.5 to 2 hours after the meal, no drink while eating at all because with all that liquid, you turn your stomach into a big bag of food and liquid and your stomach acids can't digest your food, so seems to make sense to me and has seemed to help a lot. For what it's worth.

Reply

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## **Brian**

**MARCH 13, 2016 AT 3:21 PM**

I just hit follow up button to see any replies! Thanks!

Reply

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## **Brian**

**MARCH 13, 2016 AT 3:20 PM**

I'm dizzy, low glucose, fatigued and I'm taking omeprazole and I'm young and healthy! Help!

Reply

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## **Lusina**

**DECEMBER 22, 2015 AT 11:40 AM**

Hello! First of all I'd like to thank the Dr and to all of those people who share their stories here. I too have GERD, and as the most of the others, I was also taking tons of medication – nexium 40mg, geviscon and other PPI drugs for some 8 months. I was also following a certain diet – no fruits (except bananas and pear), no veggies, no fat, no oil. I was eating meat, potatoes, grains and all the stuff which make the stomach acid lower. What a misunderstanding! What an illiteracy doctors do with us- patients with GERD! Now I see that I was doing everything the wrong way, I was eating the things which make my reflux worse. It's a month I don't take those meds anymore and as I have found this articles, I started to change my diet. After every meal I eat an apple ( I don't want to drink other meds like HCL tablets, and I did not find them in my area) and you know apple helps a lot! I don't have a heartburn, may be only some discomfort, but not as much I have had.

I don't know if you try it...

Thank you for all the advices!

Reply

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## **Kathy V.**

**DECEMBER 17, 2015 AT 11:47 AM**

Thank you for the article! I was diagnosed with MALT Gastric NH Lymphoma in January 15. I went through 20 rounds of radiation and have been cancer free since. My Gastroenterologist prescribed that I take a Nexium pill a day for life as I am prone to heavy ulcers. 12 months later (and being too tired to walk up a flight of stairs some days), I had my blood work done. My Ferritin is at 7! My Vitamin D is at 10.5 (which my gastro swears is not because of the PPIs but I'm certain it is). My Oncologist said, "No wonder you're so tired." They now want to start giving me vitamins via an IV twice a week so they can continue me on the PPIs. Although we disagree, at my request, my gastro approved me taking the Nexium every other day so I could possible absorb these essential vitamins on the days off. Do you think this could help?

Reply

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## **Dawn**

**OCTOBER 27, 2015 AT 9:01 PM**

at age 42 and a mother of 2 small children, I was giving nexium which didnt agree with me so then he gave me previcid that was taken for the past 6 yrs. The DR told me once you go on these drugs it is very unlikely you could get off. About 2 yrs after starting this medication I started to literally get extremely ill. Uncontrollable diarrhea which kept me home with no life, can't work, extreme stomach pains, massive spasms in the entire belly. Severe burning and volcanic insides. The drs basically tried to put me on anxiety med because they thought I was creating these symptoms. I told them something is wrong and I am not crazy. I dont need anxiety meds , I need answers but know one listened. I was living in hell for yrs. Every test I made them do turned up nothing then I requested another colynoscopy which he found and removed 3 extremely large flat polyps he went deep when he cut which caused me to have a severe hemorrhage 12 hrs later and spend 4 days in a cardiac unit in the hospital, I lost so much blood. I thought that was it for me. When I came home from hospital I was worse then ever with pain and now so weak from blood loss. I was so fed up with drs that I decided to go off my previcid, I went off aug 19th , it seemed like my body detoxed from that crap. My inside went through an awful month but now finally after yrs and yrs of suffering I feel like a human again, NO PAIN< NO DIARRHEA NOTHING it is a wonderful feeling to feel good .I feel weird because I forgot how no pain felt. I truely believe that previcid made me ill . I don't have acid reflux at all anymore and all symptoms subsided. I just want to get my story out in case someone is experiencing the same . .The moral of this, don't give up and listen to your body you know you the best.

Reply

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## **Dawn**

**OCTOBER 27, 2015 AT 9:04 PM**

oh, I forgot to mention, I replaced the previcid with a good probiotic twice a day. I take No prescription meds at all

Reply

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## **Sandra**

**JANUARY 17, 2016 AT 6:36 PM**

How do I detox from the PPIs?

Reply

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## **Diana**

**JUNE 19, 2015 AT 7:20 PM**

I truly can't believe all these health problems I've been getting since I've been on Protonix . I just needed it for heartburn now I have X Y Z on top of that !! That's just Crazy stuff why in the world wouldn't your Dr. tell you what the long term affects are ? Sure you can read the side affects , but they don't mention messing up other parts of your body . I'm so upset I could slap a Law Suit on my Dr.

Reply

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## **Debbie**

**AUGUST 19, 2015 AT 1:04 PM**

What other health problems have you had since taking Protonix? How long have you been on it? I'm not doing well on it, either. Insomnia, dizzy spells, anxiety, diarrhea.

Reply

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**Sulaimaan**  
**JUNE 18, 2015 AT 10:43 PM**

Hi. I've started getting symptoms of GERD last year around the summer. So my doctor prescribed me some antacids. The problem went away. But it came back 6months ago. I've completely changed my diet, and I have tried my doctors prescription again and it didn't help. So i saw a specialist and she prescribed me to a 40 milligram antacid. The pain I get is in the middle of my two ribs and it radiates to different parts of my stomach. I've been the new prescription for 2 days and I don't feel better. Can someone give me some advice? Not to mention I'm neither obese or old. I'm 16.

Reply

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**Dr. Of Art**  
**JUNE 26, 2015 AT 9:39 PM**

I went through the same thing when I was your age. Every thing they proscribed me only work for a short time or has some other effect I didn't like. My advice, STOP TAKING THOSE MEDS! Change your diet, drink a lot more water, when you have flare ups drink alooouoooooot of water. Try mediating, stress triggers flare ups. Mediating helps clam and balance your entire body. Try using aroma therapy as well.

Reply

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**Query**  
**JULY 20, 2015 AT 8:42 AM**

Surely you mean meditating, not mediating?

Reply

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**Rob**  
**JUNE 18, 2015 AT 7:25 AM**

I see all this information on why not to use these acid reducing drugs, but no alternatives for relief of acid reflux. The drugs might not be the best for me, but for the last month, it's been bad and nothing else seems to help. I've tried lemon water, acv, antacids, probiotics, etc. what else can I do to stop the reflux and get off of the meds?

Reply

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**Dan**  
**JUNE 18, 2015 AT 9:31 AM**

@Rob

First of all, very sorry you are going through all of this.

Unfortunately, the answer isn't necessarily uniform to every person, and the path to relief also varies in its difficulty.

But to truly get off of the meds, you need to figure out the underlying cause of the reflux.

To do this might require some research and trial/error on your own as well as seeing a functional medicine doctor vs. An allopathic doctor (as they tend to treat your symptoms with PPIs and send you on your way). The underlying cause could be vitamin deficiencies, bacterial and/or candida over growth, leaky gut, food intolerances (which can also be merely a symptom) or other things. Most causes are resolved through diet and lifestyle changes, but it will take several months to get back to normal.

You might need to be on the PPIs to function until you can to the bottom of things. I think the real push here isn't to encourage you to stop taking them altogether. It's just that long term use is showing some harm in some people with studies coming out all the time linking PPIs to some pretty terrible stuff. What's important is figuring out what's causing the problem because reflux is generally a symptom of something else. Once that's determined, you're on the path to being PPI free.

As an alternative to PPIs, I've had good luck with zinc l-carnosine and dgl. I've also had some improvement with chiropractic treatment. Sometimes a pinched nerve in the spine interfering with sending messages to your digestive system or issue in the hiatal area can cause or make a problem worse. Of course, you should consult with a medical professional before doing any of this. And if I were you, I'd get the opinion of a doctor willing to help find the underlying cause rather than putting you on pills to cover your symptoms.

Reply

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**Tara**  
**AUGUST 10, 2015 AT 10:27 AM**

Rob you need to find out whats causing the extra acid treating symptoms masks underlying problems which will still continue.

John Bergman is an excellent doctor look for him on youtube he will explain how to get to the root of your problem.

Tara

Reply

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**Gary**  
**OCTOBER 4, 2015 AT 9:13 AM**

Apple cider vinegar.... 2/3 swallows...

Reply

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**Barb**  
**FEBRUARY 15, 2016 AT 4:46 PM**

Try betaine HCL pepsin available from Sprout's grocery store and/or amazon.com.

Reply

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**Denny**  
**MARCH 18, 2015 AT 5:28 AM**

Digestive problems seemed to always be part of my family growing up. Now in my 60s, I am having more difficult ones; feels as though there is something deep in my throat; coughing and misery with off-and-on symptoms like a bad cold including sneezing and mucous. I am sleeping in a recliner in the living room for over a week awaiting new bed risers. Yesterday I had an endoscopy. Dr. prescribed Lansoprazole, 30 mg. After reading these very informative articles, I am not so worried about the results of a biopsy taken yesterday, but wondering if Lansoprazole is the best way to go. I studied and put myself on a strict diet a couple weeks ago to see if it helped ease symptoms. Losing 5 lbs. (so far) certainly helps but the more outstanding symptoms remain difficult. Thanks for your great information and I am sure glad I found your articles. Hope to hear your advice soon.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**MARCH 18, 2015 AT 10:27 AM**

Hi Denny,

Digestive problems of different kinds run in my family too. I've always had heartburn, reflux, constipation for years and treated it unsuccessfully with OTC meds like Tums, Pepcid AC, Mylanta, etc... Finally about 3 yrs ago my MD put me on Prevacid 30 mg twice a day for 6 months then once a day thereafter. It helped a lot, but I could still tell the problem was there. If I ate within 6 hours of bedtime, I still awoke in the night choking on stomach acid, and I had a very worrisome tender spot in my esophagus where food got stuck or burned when I drank sodas. I had to chew very small bites thoroughly or else I would be in pain when I swallowed. I had a cough too, which came and went, at times it was worse than at others.

After almost 2 yrs on Prevacid, I began having symptoms of hypomagnesemia which is a serious side effect of Prevacid, not to mention that reduced stomach acid leads to inability to properly digest food, kill pathogens, make intrinsic factor and on and on. Prevacid, or any PPI is bad news especially when it's given based on a wrong diagnosis. Actually, I didn't have ENOUGH stomach acid to properly digest the poor diet I ate. So the OTC meds and Prevacid only made things worse. I changed my diet radically after I ended up in the ER with numbness/tingling/heaviness in my legs and feet plus dizziness and falling down. I asked them to check my magnesium level since I was on Prevacid. I was told my level was within normal limits. What I didn't know (and apparently the MD didn't either, that's what's so scary) is that only 1% of all the body's magnesium is contained in the blood. The rest of it is in our cells and muscle tissue. Blood tests don't show hypomagnesemia in your muscles. I was sent home with a diagnosis of exhaustion.

I stopped the Prevacid the week I started the Paleo diet. I noticed a difference at first but continued to have heartburn anyway, at times it was horrible. But I stuck with the diet, observing the intermittent fasting as a way of treating the heartburn. (I didn't know then that dill pickles treat heartburn very well!) But fasting helped too! It took several months before the heartburn went away for good, still on the diet, and it was then that I realized the tender spot in my esophagus was no longer there. I could swallow large bites of food with no problem! I'm glad you're noticing a difference with your diet, but stick with it! A few weeks really isn't long enough to reverse your problems which may be a little worse than mine were.

Reply

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**Susan**  
**JULY 26, 2015 AT 10:16 AM**

I had the same symptoms with the mucous, sore throat and acid reflex. I had food allergy testing (IGG antibodies ) done and I am allergic to dairy, garlic, beans, and wheat. The dairy was the worsen. I stopped all caffeine, dairy and wheat, beans, sugar for a year. All symptoms went away. I lost 15 lbs too. I started eating wheat products and sugar again on a limited basis and the GERD did not come back but I gained the weight back.

Reply

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## **micheala**

**JULY 30, 2015 AT 10:35 AM**

Hay guys iv been suffering with acid gurd pain under my left rib its been affecting my life pretty bad my doc said he thinks i have a heitus hernia anyway was put on the meds and it worked at first been on them for a few months but decided to come off of them cos i was so tired and feeling like crap i went health shop got pro biotic digestive emzymes and alo vera been taking for two days and my energy has come back already im so glad i researched these drugs very early never taking them again

Reply

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## **Mary**

**MARCH 7, 2015 AT 12:52 PM**

I will tell you this...I had all the same symptoms and finally went and had an X-ray for the nagging cough and clearing of throat. They found a large mass on my right lung. I was totally freaked. The CAT scan showed a 5cm mass on my right lung. Come to find out after 2 months of strict diet, and a very strong antibiotic that nearly did me in, (they gave me a choice of needle biopsy or see if antibiotics worked which might indicate an infection). well. Thank the Good Lord it shrank to only half a millimeter! I have always had bad acid reflux and so they believe I might have aspirated contents from my stomach into my lungs. I am now seeing a pulmonologist for checkups to make sure it doesn't return. My point is this, I do not take the acid reflux pills because the actually cause me MORE harm than good! I have found eating extremely small bites, very slowly, and NOT eating to fullness or satiety. Actually, I eat just enough to satisfy but still a little hungry. I find also and it has been the advice of my Physcian as well, to eat 3 hours before bed. I have to stop 4 hours before bed because of delayed emptying. I do go to bed hungry but generally it doesn't bother me that much. It is certainly better than growing another fungus party in my lungs!

Reply

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## **Ginny**

**MARCH 8, 2015 AT 7:31 PM**

I have found sugar to be the main cause of acid reflux, followed by milk and wheat. Sugar is the worst by far. So if I cheat, I try to make sure I have sugar as early in the day as possible, not near bedtime or else I will wake up coughing up acid. Otoh, I can eat high fat and a real food carb AT BEDTIME and have NO problem with acid reflux! But sugar? Forget it.

Reply

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## **Susan**

**JANUARY 13, 2015 AT 8:46 PM**

About a year ago I developed a cough that wouldn't go away. The cough was not triggered in my lungs, but a tickle in my esophagus. Of course, doctor put me on PPI's. Then I read an article Chris had written and immediately quit taking them. The cough is very annoying. It will get better for awhile, but then comes back. I know it is diet related, I just need to find out the correct way to eat. Has anyone else experienced a cough instead of heartburn with GERD? Sometimes the tickle is a mild burn, but very localized in the esophagus.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**JANUARY 14, 2015 AT 7:06 AM**

Yes I've had a cough. In fact, I didn't realize that's what it was because I'm also an ex-smoker. Go Paleo. It should get better but may take months. I also had a tender spot mid-esophagus where food and pills got stuck, which could be very painful. I was very concerned about that and so was my MD. That's completely well now! It took time though. Good luck! You will be very pleased with the positive changes in your health as you proceed.

Reply

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**nagy**  
**JANUARY 15, 2015 AT 1:53 AM**

Yes iam experiencing same symptoms as you. It's just started 2 weeks ago and i feel that tickles is coming from my esophagus.. And each time iam breathing i get feeling that i want to puke but i don't. Not such any types of ppi medication is working with me

Reply

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**Tammy**  
**JANUARY 19, 2015 AT 3:07 PM**

I have had an annoying cough for 3 yrs ( at least ). I started with an ENT doctor who put me on a couple different antacids, said I had GERD. The cough showed no improvement. I was then referred to a lung doctor who put me on two different inhalers. I felt better for a while, but after using several months I was cough so hard after using it I thought I was going to break a rib! In between doses that cough was still there-no the answer either. Next was the gut doctor- he gave me an even stronger antacid, he did an endoscopy to check things out. No ulcers, but yes I did have GERD-evidence of the burn marks on my esophagus. My instructions were to stay on the antacid and probably for the rest of my life! I joints started to ache and I just felt run down. I was so frustrated with all of the doctors. I started to research on my own to try to help myself. I came across a couple sites ( Chris's was the best ) that explained that I had LOW stomach acid. I quit the antacid and started with apple cider vinegar( the natural kind with the'mother' in it like was recommended for about 2-3 weeks. I could tell I was on the right track, but needed more. I ordered 'Doctor's Choice brand Betaine HCL w/ pepsin and gentian bitters, a probiotic and a separate ultimate digestive enzyme. I have been taking them for about 2 mos. The dose of HCL started out high-like 7-9 capsules with NO warming/burning felt. Today I need to take 2 with a high protein meal. I think my stomach is still healing. I hope to someday not have to take any. I want to have a blood test done to see if I have a H-Pylori bacterial stomach infection. I spent 3 yrs. living in Athens Greece- maybe I picked it up there or in some other undeveloped country. It may be playing a part in all of this.

Reply

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**Thi Nguyen**  
**MARCH 19, 2016 AT 10:09 PM**

Can you please tell me about gienbitter ? powder or tablets? where do you order? Is pepsin antacid or caffeine? Betaine HCL is Hydrochloride? Thanks

Reply

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**Linda Hammontree**

**JANUARY 19, 2015 AT 6:56 PM**

You have a hiatal hernia, that's when the neck of the stomach protrudes into your esophagus. I had mine repaired 20 years ago. The stomach should stay below the diaphragm muscle, but when it moves up, it opens the spincter of the hiatal valve (the valve that keeps hydrochloric acid) from going up into the esophagus. This causes gerd, burn and a cough. Sometimes you can feel the acid in your ears. You should see a surgeon who will scope you (put a camera down your esophagus to see how badly your valve is opened. They can fix this laproscopically, yet occasionally they have to make an incision from your belly button to the bottom of your sternum. You can take prescription Prilosec while you are being tested. It will relieve you symptoms temporary. If it doesn't get fixed you can develop scare tissue in your esophagus which leads to cancer. If you don't want to be on Prilosec, check out on the web what foods are low acidically: apricots, all greenery, plain chicken, ginger tea, no soda, coffee, chocolate, tomatoes or sauce or citric fruits. Put 6" blocks until the head of your bed so when you sleep all the acid stays in your stomach. It's a balancing act until you get all this resolved. Some people get hives too.

Reply

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**Tammy**  
**JANUARY 20, 2015 AT 2:55 PM**

I did have the scope done. The doc said there was no hernia, no ulcers and he said he checked things through the stomach into the intestine- he said no problem was found. The PH test was also done at that time. He attached a device to the side of my esophagus which sent out signals that were recorded by a device on the outside. He later told me that my PH level was 16. Normal is 1.5-3.5 A high number indicates low stomach acid-but he never mentioned that!

So it seems that it remains a mystery to all of the doctors I have seen.

I did eliminate the acid triggering foods mentioned -I did this for about 2 mos. with no noticeable improvement.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**JANUARY 20, 2015 AT 3:09 PM**

Tammy,

I continue to be amazed and appalled at the cluelessness of MD's, especially in your case. If your pH was so high, why didn't he do anything about it? Clearly you need to lower your pH to normal range, and it looks like you are on your own to accomplish this. I would look for a better doctor. I've mentioned this before and it's something simple you could try. Eat a dill pickle after your meal to naturally increase your stomach acid and lower the pH. See if it works for you. Works like a charm for me. I've found the main cause of heartburn for me is sugar and grain. Hope this helps.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**JANUARY 20, 2015 AT 3:27 PM**

Tammy,

One more thing. If your cough remains even if the acid problem improves, then there might be another cause. In any case, get a better doctor. Functional medicine practitioners can be located online that are in your area or region. Good luck!

Reply

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**Donna Baskin**  
**FEBRUARY 2, 2015 AT 12:30 PM**

Last year I was diagnosed as having a Gerd related Ulcer. I was put on a Prilosec/Pepcid combo. The Prilosec which I took once a day caused EXTREME joint pains. I stopped it and continued using the Pepcid. I got some relief from the Pepcid, but still had breakthrough reflux. One day I just randomly bought a single dill pickle from the local store. I was only able to eat half of it because it was too salty. But AMAZINGLY it stopped ALL SYMPTOMS of GERD. 1 pickle 5 mos ago is all it took. By the way, chewing gum (Trident) also helped relieve my heartburn prior to eating the pickle.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**FEBRUARY 2, 2015 AT 7:23 PM**

Thanks Dinna! I have a friend who tried the dill pickle heartburn cure and it worked for her too! I guess we should call it a proacid instead of antacid.

Reply

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**Carolyn Gerrish**  
**JANUARY 25, 2015 AT 10:08 PM**

I had these symptoms and the consultant told me it was because my stomach wasn't emptying properly and it was acid coming back He prescribed me some tabs and after a course it cleared up.

Reply

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**Kevin2k**  
**JANUARY 26, 2015 AT 7:23 AM**

Could you tell us what tabs exactly?

Reply

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**Hong Nguyen**  
**FEBRUARY 10, 2016 AT 3:36 PM**

I am diagnosing with Gerd and my specialist described me Nexium 40mg and Tazac. It works for a while but then the symptoms come back. I feel a lump in my throat again and swallow difficult again. I went for gastroscopy and they found my z line irregular. I ask the specialist and he said it is not cancerous by looking at the pic. I took medication but it seems it didn't work. So I just wonder what do you have or may be your is not serious as mine.

Reply

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**Barbara**  
**JANUARY 31, 2015 AT 4:15 AM**

You may not have GERD – but silent reflux in early stage. (Known as LPR) It causes cough, excess mucous in throat, often lump-like feeling (globus sensation) in throat and often some altered or difficulty swallowing. Get checked out.

Reply

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**susan a**  
**MARCH 20, 2015 AT 11:47 AM**

You have LPR, different than the typical acid reflux. Instead of the acid giving you heartburn, it goes right to the throat area. I was diagnosed in 2006 with GERD. Took PPIs for 8 years! Had a routine bone scan and now have Osteoporosis! Took myself off the PPIs. Have been very strict with my diet, but I am still getting symptoms daily. I am very thin, always ate well, exercised regularly, so I don't fit the typical profile. I have tried everything, I am now looking into surgery to tighten the LES. Check out the book "Killing me softly from the inside" by Dr Jonathan Aviv, its all about LPR which is "silent reflux" As serious, or worse because there is no pain, just cough, constant clearing of throat, hoarseness, etc.

Reply

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**Mary Smith**  
**MAY 21, 2015 AT 9:38 AM**

Omg!!! This is it... This is me!!! Throat, Ears, Sinus... It's endless....chest is tight, cough to bring up frothy mucus.. Asthma acting up... no.. I'm telling you.. it's this form of reflux.. no indigestion... 40 mg of Nexium daily.. 1 year now.. don't know that it's helping...have had 3 intense sinus infections in 8 mo.. ears get plugged for 3 or 4 days... just keep taking or increase PPI's to hear esophagus.. That's what I'm told.. goes on and on!!!

Reply

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**Dan**  
**MAY 21, 2015 AT 11:42 AM**

Susan and Mary:

What I've done to treat my LPR (and GERD before that) with pretty good success (granted what works seems to be different for everyone), is I have followed the various advisement of how to treat leaky gut (found on Chris's site as well as others such as Dr. Axe... They all pretty much recommend the same things).

If you have any sort of bacterial or candida over growth in your small or large intestine and your gut biome is out of whack, the bloating this causes can force the acidity upward into the esophagus, even without making the stomach feeling all burning and miserable. Plus if you have leaky gut, the sinus/allergy symptoms could be an allergic reaction to food entering your blood stream. That drainage irritates the esophagus from the other end, and causes all the other symptoms of cough, hoarseness, etc.

Oddly enough, the final thing that's helped tremendously is chiropractic treatment. Let the chiropractor know about your digestive problems. There are a series of adjustments that can help this too. Sometimes it's just the communication line in your spine not effectively telling your system how to digest properly.

I'd also get a second opinion with a doctor with some understanding of functional medicine, (a physician with a DO after their name rather than an MD is a good indicator.. though there are some MDs that practice this method as well). They tend to focus on finding the underlying cause of your misery rather than covering your symptoms with PPIs. It wasn't until I did this that an effective treatment plan was put into place.

In my case, the PPIs were actually making the underlying problems worse. They tend to create an environment in your gut hospitable to candida and bad bacteria, inviting an overgrowth and crowding out the probiotics your body needs to function. PPIs also lend to all sorts of vitamin deficiencies (something the standard American diet already doesn't promote very well). And these deficiencies are a house of cards that can make recovery take a long time.

Reply

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## **Susan**

**JANUARY 29, 2016 AT 7:18 AM**

I clear my throat every time I eat, despite what I eat. I was on Prilosec for five years. It took me two attempts and many months to stop taking Prilosec but I eventually succeeded! Now I am grain free, sugar free and for the most part dairy free. I am making progress but it's slow. The past 92 panel food allergy blood test I had done was last week. The results showed I am now creating IgGs to a different set of foods to the last which was test 11 months ago. This is the third time I have had the test and the results show different foods each time, the foods I am allergic to reflecting what I eat. Clear evidence my gut is leaking!  
Has anyone else had this symptom of excessive mucus but not much heartburn?

Reply

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## **Ev**

**FEBRUARY 6, 2016 AT 5:08 PM**

I have "ear fullness" like plugged tubes, & was told I also have Acid Reflux (had a scope). I never have heartburn, but I do have "hoarseness" & when I get a cold, the cough lasts forever.

My stool analysis showed I have very little pancreatic enzymes being made, so that has produced digestion problems. I suspect they are all connected.

Reply

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## **Jesse**

**MARCH 20, 2016 AT 8:52 PM**

I have a chronic cough but its from my post nasal drip. I believe its from my acid reflux. Had this cough for 15 yrs. I haven't been able to make it stop. The Dr. Put me on nasal pills but nothing does anything. Then put me on ppis. Didn't help with the cough but helped with my acid reflux. Been on ppis for off an on for several yrs. Every time I go on the ppis I get constipated. Now I have hemrroid problems real bad. I hope its nothing more serious. Although that's enough.

Reply

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## **Don**

**JANUARY 12, 2015 AT 5:07 PM**

I had been diagnosed with an ulcer during a surgery over two years ago. My Dr has since put me on Ranitidine 150mg 2X day. Over the past year, and even worse over the last month I have been experiencing extreme amounts of burping/ gas throughout the day and night, especially after eating. Do you think this could be related to the Ranitidine and it's effects on stomach acid?

Reply

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## **Ginny**

**JANUARY 13, 2015 AT 6:16 AM**

It certainly could be. All I know is I've been off all antacids for over a year now, after being on them for more than 20 years (OTC/prescription) and I have never felt better! I no longer have that tender spot in my esophagus where food got stuck, and I no longer even get heartburn the way I used to. Now it lasts 5 or 10 minutes, untreated. When I treat it, I eat a dill pickle and the heartburn is gone within a few minutes.

So, I clearly didn't have enough stomach acid which led to the heartburn. And neutralizing what little stomach acid I did have made things even worse. I am thankful for Chris and his website and especially this article because I am completely off antacids for good now.

Word of warning. Getting off antacids after being on them for so long was NO picnic. Be prepared for some of the worst heartburn of your life at first. Skip the next meal or until the heartburn is gone, then do not eat the trigger foods like sugar and wheat. Sugar is probably the single biggest cause. It took about 3 or 4 months before I had no more heartburn, but at the time I wasn't treating heartburn with dill pickles.

Reply

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## **Jeremy**

**JANUARY 5, 2015 AT 1:28 PM**

I started taking Omeprazole 20mg nightly for 5 nights but I started having the feeling that I needed to use the restroom even after I was done, the feeling is like minor gas. I quit taking the Omeprazole after getting this feeling but now I'm on my fourth day still feeling "not empty".

How long could it take to build the acid back to kill any bacteria throughout?

Reply

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## **Donna Baskin**

**FEBRUARY 2, 2015 AT 12:40 PM**

The Omeprazole may have caused constipation. I had that same feeling when I was taking it. Although you're going to the bathroom, you may not be completely emptying. I drank one cup of Prune Juice and 45 mins later, I was relieved. Try it, it can't hurt.

Reply

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## **Chompy**

**FEBRUARY 2, 2016 AT 6:32 AM**

I have a Hiatus Hernia and my doctor prescribed me Nexium or Pariet. I don't take them regularly as I am aware of the dangers. I only take them on special occasions like Christmas or Weddings so I can have a drink without all the

discomfort but I do get Irritable Bowel Syndrome type symptoms when taking them and once I stop it can take up to two weeks before I start evacuating properly again. I use apple cider vinegar in warm water with a teaspoon of honey every morning before any food and I find this helps get me regular again.

Reply

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## **P Dutta**

**JANUARY 4, 2015 AT 6:35 PM**

My daughter (5 years) is on ketogenic diet for seizure control. Hence she takes very little carb and no sugars but vegetable oil intake is high. She has lot of bloating and acid reflux issues along with acute constipation. Her dietician has given a dose of baking soda saying her CO2 levels are low and miralax for constipation. Recently her acid reflux and bloating has increased so much that she keeps on belching and throwing up water with slimy stuff continuously through out the day. Seems she has developed GERD. I try fasting and have started giving caraway seeds water. Should i stop baking soda completely. Please advise

Reply

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## **Ginny**

**JANUARY 7, 2015 AT 4:09 PM**

I would entirely eliminate the vegetable oil and replace it with organic virgin coconut oil. Then, she probably won't even need the bicarb. Really, that's the wrong treatment for GERD anyway. As Chris says the problem is not too much stomach acid, in many cases, it's too little stomach acid. I have had some heartburn lately after kind of falling off the wagon, eating sugar and other stuff that causes heartburn. Instead of grabbing a Tums, I ate a dill pickle. And it worked!! I mean, like a dream. When you are feeling the burn in your esophagus, it seems like the last thing you want is something acidic, but it really put out the fire. Must have increased my stomach acid which then put out the bubbles which were causing the LES to open and reflux. I've tried it a number of times and it has worked.

Also, I have been taking Magnesium Glycinate at bedtime. That has helped my reflux too even without changing my diet (which is not commendable, I know) as well as eliminating my migraines altogether and helps me sleep. Reduces my chocolate cravings also!

Reply

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## **Ankush Raina**

**DECEMBER 20, 2014 AT 6:54 AM**

Hi, I have been feeling discomfort in area just above tummy and in between the end of our Rib cage. This area seems to be kind of bloated all the time and I am not able to relax my belly and to be comfortable i have to keep it pulled inside which again is very problematic for me.

I showed to doctor and he advised to go through endoscopy which resulted in SLIGHTLY LAX LES.

Doctor has given me domestal, rabeperazole and anta-acid syrup. Can u help me out with any valuable suggestions which can help me to set things right..?

Reply

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## **Ginny**

**DECEMBER 22, 2014 AT 8:44 AM**

My advice? Get a smarter doctor. Drugs usually aren't the answer. As Chris has said, in many cases the problem isn't too much stomach acid but too little. Try an experiment and see if this works: eat a dill pickle and see if that helps put out the bubbles in your stomach. Better yet, stop eating those foods that cause the bloat to start with. Or you could try betaine HCL, but it is better to let food be your medicine.

Reply

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**lisa**

**JANUARY 5, 2015 AT 9:27 AM**

I had the same issues. Huge bloating and almost felt like a softball just below my sternum. I started taking the HCL and it's helping my gut heal. I am not taking the HCL consistently anymore but I'm not having the same issues anymore. I was thankful to have come across this article.

Reply

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**Marcia**

**DECEMBER 17, 2014 AT 7:11 PM**

Hi!

I have been suffering with a hoarse voice and nausea right by my solar plexus since I had my son – 20years. I have a real sweet tooth and love carbs. Trying really hard to remove them from my diet, but I am always hungry. I am not overweight but I have a hiatal hernia and I have symptoms of GERD. I read your articles. How do you get tested for H Pylori. How do you know if your stomach acid is decreased?

Thanks!

Reply

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**Donna Baskin**

**FEBRUARY 2, 2015 AT 12:47 PM**

H-pylori testing was a stool sample.

Reply

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**Dan**

**MARCH 19, 2015 AT 5:01 PM**

As Donna mentioned, H-pylori is a stool sample, but the sample can't be taken accurately until you're off acid blockers and various other things generally prescribed for relief and/or cure by allopathic medicine. I think it's possible that certain probiotics may affect it too.

There is also a blood test to check for the h-pylori anti-bodies. When I went to see my OD, we decided to do the blood test first. If there aren't any antibodies, that should rule out h-pylori. If positive, I think the plan was to take care of the infection, then do the fecal later to confirm it's gone.

In my case, I've been taking Zinc L-Carnosine (generally marketed as Gastric Soothe or Pepzin-GI (not PepSIN). I've had very good luck with this so far, and some studies have shown that it is effective in battling H-Pylori naturally.

Reply

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## **Kevin2k**

**DECEMBER 11, 2014 AT 12:35 PM**

About 5 years ago I first got digestive troubles, this after working in 'developing countries'. This got worse 2 years ago, and I had anti-parasitic diagnostics, treatments and a matching diet.

Almost a year ago endoscopy showed 'Sliding HD' at the stomach inlet: they gave me 2 PPI pills per day as a month long treatment. Also they advised 1 PPI daily for forever, though I only took them when I felt it necessary.

My actual complaints persisted unchanged, though they said that the stomach inlet looked much better now. Things then eased in the summer only to get bad again in autumn. Got advised by an independant doctor to stop with PPI's entirely, eat smaller meals, put my bed at an angle and try acid supplements.

Now my intestine started to behave nicer again, proper stooling and less gas, but the stomach is now daily trouble.

This is just the background history, the thing is: I tried lemon juice with water first, then stopped that being unsatisfied. Later tried to Betaine HCl 250mg with every meal. 3 times a day, which felt fine initially, but I had to stop after the 5th day already. My stomach was paining me increasingly; the grumbling and belching noises suggested that my stomach inlet was unable to close? Fortunately the disturbing stomach noise was gone the day after.

Now bought some Apple Cider Vinegar with empty capsules, but fear that acid supplementing is just not gonna be a fix for me at the moment?.

Will try to get my Vitamine B12 level checked tomorrow...

No probiotics for me BTW.

And as I learned from this article: CarboHydrates are again trouble, even when not longer doing anti-parasitic diet. So let me follow that advise.

Reply

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## **Ginny**

**DECEMBER 12, 2014 AT 9:27 AM**

With Betaine HCL, you are supposed to take just the amount that helps. When it causes pain, reduce the dose.

Reply

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## **Kevin2k**

**DECEMBER 12, 2014 AT 10:37 AM**

Yes. Yet I already took the minimum with each of the three meals: One pill of 250mg. And was informed that in case the dose was on the high side, one should feel warmth in the stomach within minutes. For me the effects seemed to set in later, and differently.

Reply

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## **Ginny**

**DECEMBER 12, 2014 AT 1:20 PM**

Then try just twice or once a day.

Reply

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## **Lisa Rymer**

**AUGUST 27, 2014 AT 9:57 AM**

This is all starting to make sense and to describe the life I have lived for the past 3 years. Major bloating/constant burping (unproductive burping — the kind that gives you no relief), straining to defecate. All kinds of tests were done but no answers were given. After many months of this, I tested positive for lupus — which I think is a false positive... and finally diagnosed with fibromyalgia.

I truly believe this is all caused by these stomach issues that came on hard with a vengeance the past two days. No sleep last night. My guts were on fire. I laid there thinking that if they cut me open they would surely find an abdomen full of something that's not good for me. This is really scary stuff for me.... but the knowledge I'm gaining by reading your articles is so helpful. Thank you.

It seems that getting tested for H Pylori would be beneficial. I will be much more careful and make sure I'm taking my probiotic. And hopefully, the more I read, the more I will learn what else I should be doing.

Reply

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## **Superman21**

**NOVEMBER 5, 2014 AT 6:35 AM**

Try some Kefir.

Reply

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## **Ed**

**AUGUST 19, 2014 AT 9:37 AM**

This is a very interesting set of articles. My question is about quitting the Nexium (or other PPI). I have been on Nexium for four years and want to quit. My last attempt ended with nausea and acid reflux. I tried to quit cold turkey. How do you recommend weaning ourselves off of PPI's? Perhaps a podcast on this? Thanks for all your help!

Reply

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## **Ginny**

**AUGUST 19, 2014 AT 2:27 PM**

Hi Ed,

If I may answer, this is how I did it. I stopped eating sugar, grains, legumes, vegetable oils. At the same time I started eating fresh and cooked whole vegs/meats/fruits/high quality fats. I also stopped all soft drinks.

I started staggering my dose to every other day, then every third day for about a week. I noticed at that point that I didn't need the drug so much so after one week I stopped altogether.

I did experience some major heartburn, but intermittent fasting helped alleviate it. Slowly, after several months I had less and less heartburn. Now I hardly ever have it, and if I do it's very minor. I've been off Prevacid since last November.

It was an adjustment for sure, but I kept at it. Now I do not need it at all. You may have an easier time than I did.

Reply

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## **Jeff**

**JULY 22, 2014 AT 9:06 PM**

Hi, Chris,

I got really sick last September and have seen some progress but still remain undiagnosed and symptomatic. One doctor has diagnosed me with Meniere's. I had been on Lipitor 20 mg for about 8 years straight and had been on Omeprazole 20 mg for about 2 years straight for acid reflux, doctor's orders. However my reflex was getting worse so I was switched to Dexilant at 60 mg for about 6 months and then Nexium at 80 mg for about 2 months. After getting extremely sick, since doctor's could not figure out what was wrong with me, I quit both drugs. I developed severe difficulty breathing, post nasal drip, tinnitus, dizziness, anxiety, extreme fatigue, head and ear pressure, tingling in my hands and feet, and blurred vision. I read after stopping these two drugs that taking both of them together can increase their effect. Doctor never told me that, probably never knew. Anyway, I have been off them for awhile. I was found to be vitamin d deficient. I was wondering how long it takes to be off PPIs before the nutrient absorption goes back to normal and if there's anything I can do to help it along the way, especially for us people who have been on them for years. Anyway advise you can give would be much appreciated. I sure would like to get better, assuming these drugs have anything to do with my problems..

Reply

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## **fantasmagoria**

**NOVEMBER 20, 2014 AT 9:18 AM**

Those symptoms you describe, "...severe difficulty breathing, post nasal drip, tinnitus, dizziness, anxiety, extreme fatigue, head and ear pressure, tingling in my hands and feet, and blurred vision...." are ALL described in Chris's article on B12 deficiency.....which can be caused by prolonged use of ant-acids. check out his article on B12!

Reply

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## **Srini**

**DECEMBER 8, 2014 AT 7:22 AM**

i am taking one cap of omeprazole almost everyday-this keeps me off burping-

is this harmful in the long run?

Reply

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## **Dan**

**MARCH 19, 2015 AT 5:17 PM**

Depends who you ask.

For me, I was prescribed omeprazole for about 2 months, and I think it was actually inhibiting my recovery. Not only did I see very little change in my digestive issues, it added anxiety (even to the point of panic attack), as well as a number of other symptoms such as bloating, weird stool color and shape (which causes an anxious mind to speculate about more serious issues).

I started taking Zinc L-Carnosine, reduced my dosage of omeprazole, then eventually stopped altogether. It might have been an enormous coincidence, but I saw drastic improvements after doing that. Still not 100%, but way better than when I was on the Rx.

Some of the more documented affects of long term PPI's is acid rebound. PPI's work by permanently disabling the proton pumps in your stomach that produce acid. It takes a couple days to replace those in your gut by your body. But basically what happens is, after you stop taking after long term usage, your body over compensates and you end up with a really bad acid problem until your body re-configures itself to realize your pumps aren't being disabled daily anymore.

Many recommend weening off of them slowly. Some have reported that alternating days of PPI and H2 blockers helps before stopping them altogether.

Reply

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**Darlene Backscheider**  
**MAY 13, 2014 AT 12:18 PM**

The problem is if you aspirate in the middle of the night you could get aspiration pneumonia which could be dangerous for people who are elderly, someone with a weak immune system. I think that it might be necessary for some people to take some type of antacid or Proton Pump Inhibitors. A PPI turns off the acid pump in the body but an antacid just helps with the problem. That's what a physician told me.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**MAY 13, 2014 AT 3:43 PM**

Darlene,

It IS necessary to take a PPI as long as you don't change your diet.

As for me, I haven't had ONE episode of aspiration since eliminating gluten and dairy. Not one. I've been off Prevacid for 6 months now.

Don't believe everything doctors tell you, especially about drugs. IMHO, they are clueless, especially with regard to the big picture. They seem to believe what the drug reps tell them.

Reply

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**marianne**  
**OCTOBER 8, 2014 AT 2:48 PM**

here here!

Reply

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**Dan**  
**MARCH 19, 2015 AT 5:22 PM**

I can back up what Ginny has said with my own experiences.

I'm not feeling 100%, but changes in diet, such as eliminating grains, sugar, and the other things she's mentioned have made me go from feeling like I don't want to face the world to being at least 90% feeling normal, and feeling marginally better every day.

The biggest issue I have is patience. 😊 But I suppose if you abuse your digestive tract with a poor diet for a long time, it shouldn't be a surprise that it might take awhile to heal it back to normal.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**APRIL 9, 2014 AT 5:57 PM**

Hope this helps those of you who want to stop taking your PPI's:

I've now been off Prevacid 30mg/day since late November last year, so almost 5 months now.

At first I had rebound hyper acidity and I was pretty miserable. Then I learned about intermittent fasting and began skipping the next meal if the last one gave me heartburn. Usually breakfast made my stomach burn for hours. Fasting helped a great deal!

Over time the heartburn lessened more and more. Nowadays, I rarely have heartburn! Nor does food sit in my stomach for hours on end like it did on the PPI. I find that avoiding grains/gluten and added sugars has helped the most. Plus adding fermented foods has really helped too.

Besides the diet, quitting Prevacid was the best thing I've ever done. If you don't have any contraindicated condition like Barrett's esophagus or Zollinger-Ellison syndrome, then give it a chance. Don't give up after a few weeks. If you are like me, it WILL get better as time goes on. Keep tweaking your diet as you go, and you will get relief!

Reply

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**Dale Bliss**  
**APRIL 3, 2014 AT 9:18 AM**

I recently stopped taking Prilosec which I had been on for about 5 years. I had a blood test done last month which indicated that I was low in B12 but my iron was good. I have, for the past three weeks, started eating fermented food and taking water with Bragg's ACV twice a day. I'm also supplementing with sublingual B12 drops (methyl) once a day. I'm trying to rebuild my friendly bacteria in my gut and hoping this improves my 3 conditions, mild arthritis in my knees, patches of psoriasis, and of course, heartburn! Already, my psoriasis is clearing up which I've had for the past 3 years and I no longer get cramps in my calf muscles at night! Do you think I'm doing all the right things? Oh, and my knees are feeling remarkably better! 😊

Reply

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**Marcus Kool**  
**APRIL 3, 2014 AT 10:15 AM**

Dr John Bergman wrote a book on how to REVERSE arthritis. You can also look at one of his videos on Youtube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uUgsGsPviY>

I like Dr Bergman a lot: he explains very well what is the CAUSE and how to cure. BTW: it happens often that when one physical problem is cured by removing the CAUSE, there are side effects: other problems go away “magically”.

Reply

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**Joyce**  
**MARCH 31, 2014 AT 2:02 PM**

I have been on omeprazole for about 2 years. Quit cold turkey last week and I have not had heartburn but pain and cramping in my lower abdomen. Is this normal or just another problem and not related?

Reply

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**Rachel**  
**APRIL 28, 2014 AT 6:21 AM**

I'm not a doctor, but that doesn't necessarily sound related to me ... my dad was actually put on acid reflux drugs for years after complaining of lower back pain (which is ridiculous of his doctor). Later it turned out to be gallbladder problems and completely unrelated to acid production. I will say, though, when I went off my Prevacid cold turkey, I somehow developed a gluten allergy – which can trigger abdominal pain. Perhaps you could try an elimination diet to see if any foods are triggering it?

Reply

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**Ed**  
**MARCH 23, 2014 AT 8:32 AM**

Been taking PPI in the morning 40mg and a blocker at night 40mg for over a month now. A week ago I started feeling sore in my upper back. Still feels sore and doesn't respond to aspirin or alieve. Could the soreness be related to the meds?

Reply

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**harold**  
**MARCH 23, 2014 AT 12:01 PM**

Ed: I had the same thing and it was on my right side just below my shoulder blade. I am off the PPI's and the pain is gone. You have got to get away from the antacids as much as possible. I am convinced that diet and the proper enzymes are the answer. Do some research on this site and other's and come up with your own answers. Good luck

Reply

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**Ed**  
**MARCH 25, 2014 AT 2:20 PM**

Thanks Harold. I'm going to try to get off the PPI. I think the worst of course. Afraid my digestive issues have turned into cancer and moved to my lungs. Everything on the web related to upper and mid back soreness points to lung cancer. It's been stressing me out. Hoping and praying getting off the PPI solves the issue.

Reply

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**harold**  
**MARCH 26, 2014 AT 8:03 AM**

Ed: Worry doesn't get you anywhere. Get those lungs checked out and take control of your life. Getting off the PPI's is going to help with your digestion, but you will need to get on to some enzymes or probiotics to keep you off the antacids. I am not a doctor and still have issues myself, but after 25yrs of western medicine's answer to my problems I have chosen a different direction. Good luck. You may want to take a look at a book called the makers diet. It is good stuff.

Reply

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**Ed**  
**MARCH 26, 2014 AT 11:35 AM**

Thanks again!! I'll definitely take your advice.

Reply

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**Jo gayle**  
**MARCH 18, 2014 AT 8:10 PM**

I have ulcers and take ppi for 2 yrs. I tried everything to get off the meds but nothing I tried stop the pain like the pip. Diet, b12, multiple bits nothing. What can I do other than the ppi?

Reply

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**harold hammell**  
**MARCH 15, 2014 AT 11:45 AM**

It sounds like all of us who are dealing with Gerd's or Barrett's have the same issues and no answers. We are put on PPI's or some form of antacids to reduce acid reflux and protect our esophagus. Then we end up with all the gastrointestinal side effects (gas, bloating, diarrhea, abdominal pain, nausea, and the list goes on. If that wasn't bad enough. It doesn't cure anything. So now you ask what is the answer. I wish I knew. I am trying to get off all the meds, and going L-natural with digestive aids and vitamins. My Barrett's has gotten worse with all the drugs and my quality of life has diminished considerably, so I have nothing to lose. Yes I have the seed of fear that was planted by my gastro guy about cancer, and trust me I don't want it, but I feel like a dog who has spent 25 years chasing its tail. If you have a better suggestion let me know. thanks

Reply

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**Zarate****MARCH 14, 2014 AT 11:16 PM**

i havent had a chance to read through all of the comments yet, because at the moment i am in pain, and in that "desperate" mode to find out whats wrong with me. i have been taking omeprazole and ranitidine daily for quite some time now for my acid reflux, and it was helping for quite some time. i was able to pretty much eat whatever i wanted. but recently i had the flu, and i had the symptoms for a very long time, but when the flu was starting to die down, i got heartburn and indigestion, bloating, worse than ever! i thought it was just a simple episode but its been going on for 1 1/2 months now. its really messing with my quality of life, and others are starting to notice it too now. anyways, do you think i should stop taking omeprazole and just take the ranitidine? perhaps im taking too much and thats causing bacteria to build up in my stomach? i need something to help the acid reflux part, but i need the bloating and constant nausea to go away. i really only feel better when i eat, but only for a little while then it hurts again. I have a dr. appointment next week, but im looking for any advice to help ease my mind till then. thank you!

Reply

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**nada****MARCH 15, 2014 AT 8:48 AM**

if i were you i would try to wean myself off of the drugs and find other ways to deal with the symptoms. those drugs only mask the symptoms and do not treat the underlying problem. doctors just want to make money. they dont care about you. try probiotics to build the good bacteria in your stomach again. it might take some time. id also do what kris suggested in his last article for his suggested treatment. wish you the best of luck. alot of us are in the same boat

Reply

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**harold****MARCH 16, 2014 AT 8:50 AM**

thanks for the input. I believe that Chris has the answer, and it is my intent to try his products and methods. FYI be careful of individual who are selling erbs etc , and I'm not referring to Chris. I got a hold of a chiropractor who put me on a regiment of enzymes and I though I was going to die. Good luck.

Reply

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**nada****MARCH 16, 2014 AT 10:25 AM**

why were you going to die? were the enzymes the chiro gave you bad for you?

Reply

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**harold****MARCH 17, 2014 AT 10:02 AM**

The enzymes where for digestion. He gave me 4 different kinds and instructed me to take approximately 15 of the tablets a day. I think he overdosed me. It was bad. I am going to try Chris's

suggestion's soon.

Reply

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**Rachel**

**MARCH 19, 2014 AT 6:31 AM**

I'm so sorry – your symptoms sound horrible! But as someone who followed Chris's protocol to the letter after 10 years of prescription PPIs, I am a completely different (healthy!!) person almost a year later, and it's 100% worth the discomfort. It WILL get better as your stomach heals itself. I was nauseous for two solid weeks, could hardly eat, my stomach was paralyzed and unable to digest anything. But I am completely better now and have never once missed my prescriptions. Not to mention I can absorb essential vitamins/minerals now. The PPIs were slowly but surely killing me. Now I can't necessarily eat whatever I want ... sadly, gluten is a thing of the past. I was probably always allergic (if you read Chris's articles, gluten can be a major acid reflux trigger!) but my body was so damaged that the PPIs masked the problem.

I'm no doctor, so this isn't medical advice, but this is what worked for ME while I went cold-turkey from PPIs. For nausea, suck on hard peppermint candies constantly. They really work. Try ginger tea. Or go straight to the source and rub some peppermint essential oil or a blend like DoTerra's DigestZen right on your midsection. For internal healing, take the licorice supplements like Chris suggested. For bloating, drink aloe vera juice or take some charcoal tablets. Gaia's herbal gas/bloating tea could also help. And if you do anything, be sure to take HCl pills with Pepsin before/during meals. My stomach was so damaged it couldn't do anything – I would vomit up meals from days prior because I literally filled my stomach to the brim – zero digestion was happening. The HCl aids digestion while the stomach learns to function again. Probiotics and enzymes can help, but start slowly – my stomach didn't handle them well at first and gave me more nausea on top of everything.

Whatever you do, though, realize that continuing to take the medication is only delaying serious health consequences down the road. Cancer from going OFF the medicine is just a scare-tactic by doctors eager to keep people sick and drugged up. As long as you eat pure organic whole foods, take care of yourself, and give your body the tools it needs to heal itself, your body can do the rest. Best of luck.

Reply

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**nada**

**MARCH 19, 2014 AT 10:08 AM**

Rachel, Thank you so much for taking time out of your day to write that comment. I know it wasn't for me but IT TRULY BENEFITED ME A LOT. Thank you so much. I hope you're open to answering questions I may have for you.

Reply

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**nada**

**MARCH 19, 2014 AT 10:16 AM**

Since I was only on PPI's for 3-6 months (can't recall lol) I don't think it's that bad and I'm angry I was put on them because my situation wasn't that bad to begin with. If anything, I think it made my nausea worse. It's good to know that the "cancer" thing is just a scare tactic because I was starting to get really worried about that. Anyway, when you say organic foods, what are you specifically referring to? I mean, do you still eat bread, cereal, sugar, etc?

Right now, I have started taking probiotics, started the HCL with Pepsin (only 1-2 pills is what I can handle right now) when I eat a meal high in protein. I used to be vitamin D deficient, my level was super low, I think the PPIs prevented my body from properly absorbing nutrients. But since I've been off them my level is now in the normal

range, THANK GOD!!! Right now I am a little low in Potassium though. I dont know what more I can do to get it up... I eat a banana every morning.

So I guess my question for you is, what kinds of foods do you eat? Just fruits and veggies? What do you avoid? And lastly, did you consume fermented foods like Kefir as Chris suggested? I cant have those since most of them have dairy in them. Yup, I suddenly became lactose intolerant...

You and Chris are lifesavers.

Reply

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**Rachel**  
**MARCH 19, 2014 AT 2:09 PM**

I'm so glad to hear that was helpful! Sometimes I worry I'm rambling or sharing TMI 😊

I was pretty angry, too. Thank goodness you were only on PPIs for a few months! Even the commercials say, "never take this medication for more than 14 days, or else". You're right though, while on PPIs your body doesn't absorb nutrients much at all. Scary.

For me, healing myself meant going far past just the PPIs. It took me a loooooong time to find all the hidden health dangers. Anything I once assumed was "safe" I thoroughly researched. Sadly, none of it was even close to safe. And foods that are commonly demonized are actually essential to health, like eggs and real butter! I do eat lots of organic fruits/vegetables, plus the occasional fermented kombucha (I'm allergic to dairy, so no kefir for me either :). I limit my sugar intake and drink water almost exclusively. I buy hormone-free, organic, free-range meats. I eat good fats like fish oils, coconut oil, avocados, butter. I'm now off gluten, which was really the only time I still needed the HCl so I'm basically off that as well.

But I also avoid GMOs, processed foods, and toxic chemicals like my life depends on it (which it does). I eat as "clean" as I can possibly can. That also includes anything that touches my skin, such as cleaning products and personal care products like makeup or shampoo. Even air fresheners have scary neurotoxic ingredients! <http://www.EWG.org> is an invaluable resource for looking up product safety. I also never take any drugs if I can help it, except natural supplements and vitamins made from whole-foods. I cook all my own food, and only use the stovetop or oven for heat. At the risk of sounding conspiratorial, this country is in the business of keeping people sick for profit. Look at any other country and they've rigorously banned countless substances that Americans, on the other hand, are encouraged to eat or slather on our skin. "FDA approved!" But I digress.

I fully admit my lifestyle is expensive and might sound extreme. It is. But I'd much prefer to "pay the farmer now than pay the doctor later". And I feel so much healthier than I ever have, so it's worth it! So anyway. I hope this mega-long post provides some help 😊

Reply

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**Ginny**  
**JULY 15, 2014 AT 8:26 AM**

Rachel,

I like the most current idea that wheat itself, or some not yet identified protein in it, is the problem, not necessarily gluten, except in the case of celiac sprue. Even if the wheat is organic and non-GMO, it still has anti-nutrients that make digestion more difficult, causing gas which causes the LES to open, allowing reflux. Where doctors MISdiagnose (which leads to wrong treatment and new health problems requiring yet more drugs) is in

considering stomach acid the bad guy. It's not. As the article says the stomach must have enough acid to kill bacteria, for one, before it causes problems in the small intestines. I find that drinking about 2 ounces of very dry red wine daily helps my digestion as well as salads with vinegar base.

I find it embarrassing to be part of "health" care (I'm a nurse) that perpetuates sickness and disease with the very drugs/treatments given to help! Let the buyer beware. It's good to question the medical status quo when they not only don't provide the right answers, they actually harm us while supposedly trying to help us. I'm grateful for the knowledge I've gained here, namely, our diet is to blame; but now that we've made changes, we've found out our new diet is much tastier than the old one, not to mention the old problems are disappearing. Seek and ye shall find.

I hope that doctors and nurses will pay attention to the new paradigm and get on board soon!

Reply

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**Rachel**  
**JULY 16, 2014 AT 6:19 AM**

Ginny,

Thank you for your comment! I'm sure you have a very interesting perspective on all this, coming from the medical field. Especially since the natural movement has been rapidly gaining momentum recently as more and more people realize the dangers in mass-medicating! Obviously this site was life-changing for me, but even other dietary changes I've made have healed SO many underlying health issues. I'm glad to hear you're experiencing the same!

I actually had to stop eating gluten because I became violently allergic/intolerant soon after stopping my PPI medication. This remained a mystery to me up until last week, when I learned that Candida overgrowth (which my stomach conditions were perfect for) can sometimes manifest itself as a gluten intolerance. I'll spare you the glorious details, but it appears my body can't tell the difference between Candida and gluten, as their makeups are similar, and the ensuing immune response led to the allergy. So there's a chance if I go on the painfully restrictive Candida-killing diet, I might be able to eat gluten again. We'll see!

Reply

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**Dan**  
**MARCH 19, 2015 AT 5:37 PM**

You know what's interesting about that..

I don't have a gluten allergy. I've went to an allergist and got tested for that. All negative.

I definitely have a sensitivity though. Especially when I ate off the shelf bread or non-GF products.

But there was these few times I went to a pizza place that imported all of it's semolina flour from Italy for their crust. Clearly this had gluten in it, but it never once produced the same discomfort and gross issues that GMO-based gluten products have for me.

Could be a coincidence.... But it's a pretty profound one.

Reply

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**Ginny**  
MARCH 22, 2015 AT 11:54 AM

Dan,

Unlike you, I've never been tested in a lab, but I've definitely done my own testing by eliminating then reintroducing certain foods. I know I am sensitive to grains in general even rice if I eat too much, also to milk, "vegetable" oils, and especially to sugar. Sugar is by far the worst offender which causes acid reflux. On the other hand, I can eat high fat low carb just before bed and not suffer acid reflux, yet if I have any sugar or milk, I will wake up choking on stomach acid. This information is invaluable. No doctor can tell you this. So glad you also have discovered this too!

Reply

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**harold**  
MARCH 14, 2014 AT 11:35 AM

I have suffered with barretts esophagus for 25 years. I have been on some form of antacid for 20 of those years. I had surgery to repair my hiatal hernia and restrict acid reflux. The surgery was a temporary fix. In the last several months my body is starting to reject the antacids. I suffer from severe gas, bloating and bowel problems, along with stomach pain. I have mild dysplasia and have been told by my doctors that my only course of treatment is reduction of acid. I am sick most of the time and can never get a good nights rest. I want to try another course of treatment but have the seed of fear that was planted in me by my doctors, that is I abandon the antacids I will most likely get cancer. I am 70 years old and aside from the barretts in good health. I am open to any suggestion. HELP

Reply

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**Susan**  
JANUARY 29, 2016 AT 9:44 AM

Harold, read all of Chris's posts and his followers comments. It will help you. Start small and build, you will be successful with this I know I am a civert and most definitely on the mend because of Chris's advice!

Reply

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**Julie**  
MARCH 9, 2014 AT 7:37 PM

My 5 month old son was just discharged from a brief hospital stay with GI doctor stating he has Esophageal Candidiasis caused by Zantac. He also had Lymphoid Nodular Hyperplasia and Neutropenia. It seems there is something causing these things and I am spending many sleepless nights trying to figure it out myself. Could it be the Zantac? He is exclusively breastfed at this time and I have suspected food intolerances in the past. I am continuing a strict elimination diet but he still seems to be in much pain after eating (1-2 hours), has blood in stools and rashes on body (at times). Any advice is so appreciated!

Reply

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**Ginny**  
FEBRUARY 25, 2014 AT 10:01 AM

I wouldn't be surprised to see a class-action suit against these companies who make PPI's and the doctors who prescribe them. At the very least, MD's are being derelict in their duty to their patients by prescribing them, except in certain rare cases. When will they learn? How many times do we have to see the "wonder drugs" of yester-year now being advertised by the law firm of [insert favorite law office here] before WE learn not to trust our doctors implicitly? Let the buyer beware. We all need to do our homework before ingesting ANYTHING. I'm not saying all drugs are bad, but there are some really bad drugs that should have been pulled off the market ages ago. PPI's are just one example.

Reply

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**Rachel**  
**FEBRUARY 25, 2014 AT 10:07 AM**

I agree with you completely. At the very least, doctors need to stop prescribing them like candy and actually READ the usage restrictions!! Even the advertisements and commercials say in the fine print, "not to be used for more than \_\_\_ days" ... which is usually around the two week timeframe. I was taking these things, under my doctor's implicit instruction, for TEN YEARS. Thankfully I'm done now and slowly healing (no thanks to any doctor except Chris Kresser), but who knows the long-term damage that was done.

Reply

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**Dan**  
**MARCH 22, 2015 AT 10:53 PM**

There are a lot of uninformed doctors out there. PPIs are only effective if used properly. I had to figure this out on my own via internet research.

Every doc I spoke with basically said take it whenever. But timing is critical with PPIs. You should take them in the morning, and 30-45 minutes before you eat. That is the sweet spot of activation vs. the proton pump activation triggered by eating.

H2 blockers like ranitidine are less powerful and should be taken at night.

When I was on both of those, none of the doctors (3 of them, all from different clinics) knew anything about the timing. Said I could take all of them at the same time.

Don't get me started on how they dismissed the side effects. I'm pretty sure my uphill battle with all of this has been made steeper because I went with their advice of dealing with the side effects for awhile. Their solution for dealing with the anxiety was to suggest a drug for that rather than attacking any underlying causes (which I'm pretty sure was magnesium deficiency made worse by.. Wait for it.. PPIs and their magnesium leeching tendencies.)

Reply

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**Nada**  
**FEBRUARY 25, 2014 AT 7:57 AM**

Chris, I just wanted to say THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS. It all makes sense to me. I've been putting pieces of the puzzle together in my head but you just confirmed it and gave me a more detailed description of what is going on.

I feel that most doctors I see about any health issue, avoid the root cause of my problems and symptoms. It's getting really really annoying, because what are doctors for.

NOW I KNOW THAT SOMEONE CARES ENOUGH TO ACTUALLY LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND I'M SO GRATEFUL TO HAVE COME ACROSS YOUR ARTICLES.

Thank you so much, again. We're all in this together, and we will be cured in the correct way.

Reply

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**Ellen McCormick**  
**FEBRUARY 20, 2014 AT 11:54 AM**

Why have you never mentioned Genetically modified organisms in our food and the increase in stomach and gastrointestinal diseases since they were introduced into our food system back in 1994-1996? Many of these problems, and I have read all these comments and articles, have been relieved by getting off of GMOs and off of meats that might have eaten GMOs and sometimes with your other suggestions. It appears that 50% of children at this point have acide reflux. This isn't normal and it's coming from our food and from the pesticide driven agriculture we currently have in this country. The medical profession knows nothing about nutrition so it would be understandable that they can't solve this problem with their drugs. Many people with GERDS, Celiac , etc. have been cured just by eating the right foods and certainly eliminating GMOs. Good Luck.

Reply

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**Allison Butler**  
**FEBRUARY 13, 2014 AT 7:43 AM**

I have IBS and a wheat intolerance and have recently stopped taking Omeprazole after being on it for approx 6 years. I am just about coping with the IBS by taking Colofac (rantazine had no effect), but have been feeling very low with cold symptoms for around 6 months continuously. I assume my immune system is low and I'm lacking nutrients due to the long term use of Omeprazole. So, my question is, if I take multi vitamins, how long should it be before I start feeling myself again?

Reply

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**Neil Meiskey**  
**FEBRUARY 3, 2014 AT 11:02 AM**

Neil Meiskey  
JANUARY 21, 2014 AT 8:00 PM

I have been diagnosed with Barret's esophagus a few years ago. 10-12 years ago I had such bad GERD that my esophagus scared almost closed to the point I choked a lot when I ate. Incidentally I never felt heartburn at all until AFTER my esophagus was stretched. After I was "stretched", I was put on Prilosec with the assumption I would have to be stretched every few years. I was about 52 at that time. Later I was switched to Nexium to "heal" the erosion and scarring. I never did have to get the second stretch done. I am now 64 and still on Nexium and really want to be off it. About 6 months ago I went basically Paleo, not perfect but 80-90%. Generally I feel better and lost a few pounds (I am very active and weight gain is a small problem, not a major one for me). When I mention to my specialists I want to go off the Nexium they suggest not due to the Barrets being a pre-cancerous condition. I REALLY want to stop taking Nexium but am a bit scared due to the Barrets. What say you folks and Chris, am I still a viable candidate to get off this stuff? If so how can I go about it? Thanks.

Neil

Reply  
Neil Meiskey  
JANUARY 21, 2014 AT 8:02 PM

Forgot to mention I do no dairy, have been lactose intolerant since my earl 20's.

Neil

Reply

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**harold**

**MARCH 15, 2014 AT 11:53 AM**

Neil: If you get an answer from Chris that give's you a natural direction or path, let me know thanks. I am in the same boat.

Reply

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**illy**

**FEBRUARY 3, 2014 AT 4:30 AM**

Hi!

I had endoscopy twice. The first showed small ulcer and mild gastritis. Then I'd been taking Omeprazole for 4 months. Then I had second endoscopy that showed no ulcer but still ongoing mild gastritis and a small hernia. So I was again prescribed with high dose PPI's for another 12 weeks slowly reducing the dose towards the end of period.

I had the same symptoms as you described in your article. Especially gas production that bothers me a lot. And later on pain again has started developing in my stomach on the left side. It's been almost 12 weeks and I take lower dose now but how can I be sure it that helps if I don't feel very well? Should I stop taking them? Should I ask my GP for another endoscopy?

I am only 24 years old. Please advise 😞

Reply

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**harry fisher**

**DECEMBER 21, 2013 AT 7:48 AM**

im taking preaciid through a feeding tube.

I have c a d but never had any acid reflex problems

im on clopedogrel dilitiazem simvastim and baby aspirin

I asked my doctor why im on preacid she said this what the doctor in the hospital put me on

this has beem over a year ago

do you know of any reason im could still be on any antacid thank you

Reply

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**Steve**

**DECEMBER 2, 2013 AT 9:09 AM**

I've been reading all these comments with interest.

Three times this year I was doubled over in pain after eating particularly fatty foods and drinking a lot of lager – turns out that it was air stuck inside me that didn't want to come out. It was agony for about 45 minutes each time, and then I'd be free!

After seeing the doctors in February, and being tested negative for gallstones (apart from a teeny one), I was given Omeprazole, which I never took. I was fine all Summer, and then at the end of October, I had another painful experience – went to the doctors and was told to take my Omeprazole.

I did this for 7 days, and felt extremely unwell, so stopped. I carried on with my normal unhealthy diet, and began to burp lots, more than I ever have. This carried on until I got a pain in my chest. I was checked at A&E for heart problems, and sent away with Gaviscon which cooled it down.

The GP then suggested I take the full course of Omeprazole, but I took it for 3 days and felt terrible. It stopped my headaches when eating, but I was full of air! It also made me really over-excited and I was very very happy. Then I started feeling really unwell. So I stopped after 3 days and researched what the medicine's side effects were.

The GP gave me another style PPI, but I don't want to take them. I've been off Omeprazole now for three days, and the huge headaches I got have come back when eating, even an apple or a yoghurt.

Now I understand it was most likely acid rebound reflux – for a problem that I didn't have in the first place!!

I'm trying to just eat healthy fruit and veg, supplemented by lots of ginger tea, gallons of water and Gaviscon if it really feels like its burning. I also took my first DGL tablet this morning, and haven't been burping apart from straight after meals. I can also now go to the toilet regularly!

Do you think the headaches will ever stop? I imagine they are just caused by a massive amount of acid being released when I start eating, but they can be really painful, go on for a long time and be so intense I feel light headed.

Reply

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**Steph**  
**NOVEMBER 21, 2013 AT 9:41 AM**

Dear Chris,

I've been on the maximum does of Prevacid for 8 years due to GERD along with Elavil (7 years) because my gastro specialist told me that I have a hypersensitive esophagus (the PH test (BRAVO) came back normal two times hence hypersensitive esophagus). I started having horrible problems with acid reflux 8 years ago due to extreme stress while living in a foreign country which was why my gastro specialist put me on Prevacid. But now the stress is completely gone and I feel great. My GERD isn't even close to as bad as it use to be, but I'm still on Prevacid although I'm finally completely off of Elavil because it wasn't doing anything. Furthermore, I was recently off of Prevacid for 10 days for a Ph test and menometry (esophagus motility study), and noticed little difference with my acid reflux when I was off the medication except a slight burning in the afternoons and very early mornings (5-6am). Most of my acid reflux occurs at night shortly after I go to bed, and I sleep on a reclining chair. Usually I have acid reflux at night when I'm trying to sleep on the days when I'm upset about something or very excited about something good that has happened. It's very annoying. Also, I was recently diagnosed with Gastroparesis and just started a diet for this condition and am eating 5 to 6 small meals a day. I had a PH test performed last week and was completely off of Prevacid and my PH test came back normal. In fact, I have less stomach acid than a normal stomach usually has. I am wondering, after reading your articles, if my problem now is with the Prevacid (I also take extra strength Gaviscon almost daily) and low stomach acid levels along with the Gastroparesis rather than heartburn or GERD? Is it possible for me to gradually wean off of Prevacid and normalize my stomach?

Reply

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**Cor Van Pelt**  
**NOVEMBER 17, 2013 AT 6:08 PM**

Good day,

By accident,or fortune,I came accross this website. Iwas looking for an answer to my question: Do medications restrict the body to

absorb nutrients from food?

I asked this question because my wife of 51 years has Parkinsons disease. She is on several medications. She appears to become weaker almost by the week. She is tired all the time. My thinking is that the body(not the brain),can't heal itself if we poison it with several foreign pharmaceutical poisons.Am I totally wrong in my assumption??

Any ideas out there?

Cor Van Pelt.

Alberta.

Canada.

Reply

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**Ginny**

**DECEMBER 12, 2013 AT 8:10 AM**

To Cor Van Pelt:

On your computer, type in: Terry Wahls.com. She is a medical doctor who over came advancing MS. Also search for Dr. David Perlmutter. He is a neurologist who specializes in treating neurological diseases like PD, which my mother has also. She has improved somewhat on the Paleo-based diet (Paul and Shou Ching Jaminet's Perfect health Diet). And she's only been on it for about 3 weeks now.

To answer your question, I would say that you wife needs to stop eating harmful foods first (like grains, vegetable oils, legumes, peanuts, sugar, and all refined foods), then possibly she will be improved enough that her doctor can take her off some of her medications. Good luck to you!

Reply

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**misty**

**NOVEMBER 16, 2013 AT 9:45 AM**

I am in a health crisis right now and need some advice. Long story short, I had a myriad of tests done earlier this year. Colonoscopy revealed possible crohns as I had ulcers in my small intestine and evidence of scaring. No treatment plan was set up the dr was concerned that side effects may be worse then symptoms. I have been doing ok until a few weeks ago. I started hurting in my upper left back like many times and started taking prevacid. Seemed to help for a few days and then started having bad belching and lower abdominal tenderness and pain. I feel so sick all over and my whole back feels inflammed from my gut. I just don't know what to do anymore. I went back to the dr and she started me on dexilant and bentyl. This just made things worse it seemed. Went off of that and the only thing that has seemed to help is aloe vera juice stomach formula. I can't eat everything seems to bloat me and I just feel sick. The upper back pain is what is really uncomfortable and my lower intestines keep making loud noises! Any advice.

Reply

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**RES**

**OCTOBER 22, 2013 AT 6:51 AM**

Unfortunately, unless you find an independent holistic doctor, conventional healthcare professionals just plain aren't allowed to prescribe anything except dangerous sponsored drugs from Big Pharma. One, this pays their salary. Two, they aren't taught anything else in med school (nutrition comprises maybe one brief class lesson of their entire 8-year program). Three, the FDA

closely regulates everything and their official position is that nothing from nature can alleviate let alone cure any ailment, since nothing from nature can be patented. So a doctor can say, “eat more veggies” or “avoid salt”, but never ever could he say, without fear of a SWAT team swooping in, “eat more tomatoes since lycopene can help prevent cancer.”

This is why I personally have been managing my own health for years now, even curing my 10-year chronic acid reflux via this site! It sounds like you’re doing all the right stuff to be on the road to recovery, though. Is it not working yet, or not as well as you’d like?

Reply

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**Rebecca**  
**OCTOBER 25, 2013 AT 9:47 AM**

I grew up in the midwest, on a midwestern diet (corn, meat, potatoes & pasta) under two parents who worked in the medical field and are on many drugs themselves. (Important to note that my mom had a successful stem cell transplant in 2005 that cured her leukemia – so some modern medicine is needed.) It’s just disappointing and eye opening when you learn that everything you thought was right – isn’t – and the people in the medical field & your own government aren’t trustworthy. I have been reading endlessly and started taking supplements, including pre-natal vitamins, vitamin D, DCL, omega 3 fish oil, enzymes & Florastor. I just ordered HCL + Pepsin & Gentian – so I’m hoping that will help. I also plan on adopting the SCD diet in hopes that my dad, who also has ulcerative colitis and acid reflux, will do the same. However, will all of this help when I was diagnosed with a hiatal hernia? Or was the hernia a result from the years of reflux and can be eventually fixed? I also have suffered from IBS and mild asthma since my teenage years. This website has been a BLESSING to me and I have encouraged so many others to visit it as well!

Reply

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**Rebecca**  
**OCTOBER 22, 2013 AT 12:05 AM**

Do you have any recommendations of doctors like yourself..? I wish I could find one that really does the research before prescribing medications. I have had reflux since I was 8 years old. I’m now assist 30. Been on highest dose of pantaprazole I could be on and finally quit. I tested positive for the beginning antigens for h-pylori and decided after reading the comments second under the last article that I am going to continue with probiotics, enzymes, licorice root abd a low carb diet before I go in and eradicate ALL my gut flora... :-\

Reply

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**Susan**  
**JANUARY 29, 2016 AT 11:59 AM**

Rebecca where do live, I would highly recommend my functional medicine practioner.

Susan

Reply

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**Jamison**  
**SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 AT 4:59 AM**

You should try probiotic foods with every meal and also try to eat some raw food with every meal (to get live enzymes). Steak and salad should cause you less problems than steak and cooked green beans, for example. A few pickles or raw sauerkraut with

every meal should do the trick. it has to be pickles that are naturally fermented in a salt brine though, not in vinegar. and the sauerkraut must be raw too – a good handful, ideally with some cooking fat drizzled over it. Probiotic foods are full of enzymes to help you digest your food, in addition to having way more probiotics than even the highest grade therapeutic dosage.

Reply

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**LisaJayne**  
**SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 AT 7:56 AM**

Thanks very much Jamison – Ill give this a try

Reply

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**LisaJayne**  
**SEPTEMBER 18, 2013 AT 3:19 AM**

I wonder if anyone can please help? Any advice would be hugely appreciated.  
I am coming up to 7 weeks pregnant with my first child and have developed indigestion which manifests mainly as a feeling of constantly having food stuck in my throat. Before becoming pregnant I already had some digestion issues (although not indigestion) for which I was taking swedish bitters and 2 Now Foods super digestive enzymes before each meal as well as Biokult probiotics after meals. I am still taking the probiotics but the digestive enzymes and swedish bitters arent approved as safe in pregnancy so to be on the safe side I have cut them out.  
I read that apple cider vinegar could help so have just started taking 2 tablespoons in a glass of water before meals, thus far it seems to have provided only minimal relief although I am still hopeful it could help as I only started this with my evening meal yesterday so its early days. Does anyone please have any other suggestions for how I could overcome this? Either through diet or natural remedies, I dont want to take anything over the counter/prescription.  
Before being pregnant I was following a primal diet fairly strictly approx 90%. In the last 2 weeks I have had to relax this due to nausea – Im still trying to stay away from grains but have been eating some potatoes and a little white rice.  
Any advice either from Chris or any followers would be hugely appreciated!

Reply

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**RES**  
**OCTOBER 22, 2013 AT 6:31 AM**

While I have no idea how this may or may not impact a pregnancy, I personally stopped taking apple cider vinegar in favor of hydrochloric acid capsules. The ACV was nasty, didn't help much, and it can start to erode your teeth. And I would consider HCl to still be in the natural remedy category. Avoiding white potatoes might be a good idea to try as well, since nightshades can be difficult to digest? Also, peppermint essential oil can really knock out nausea either topically or via hard candy! Or ginger tea.

One caution, though – if you really feel like food is getting STUCK, you could have an esophageal scar tissue build-up causing a blockage. I struggled with this for years until I had an emergency upper endoscopy to remove the scarring. Not to scare you or anything, but it could be worth bringing up with your doctor!

\*Disclaimer: I am not a doctor and this is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent disease. Contact a healthcare professional.

Reply

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**Eddie**  
**SEPTEMBER 15, 2013 AT 5:37 AM**

I have a friend with GERD and a duodenal ulcer. She's been prescribed a couple of different medicines to reduce her stomach acid to cure the ulcer. I can't find any info anywhere that contradicts this treatment plan.

I'm currently thinking that she should take the medicine until the ulcer is healed, then work on building up her stomach acid? Any thoughts?

Thanks!  
Eddie

Reply

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**Kenneth**  
**AUGUST 28, 2013 AT 6:40 PM**

Sir Good Day,

Im suffering with my GERD,  
I already read your article and I'm convinced  
and I already stop taking my PPI's and antacids, I don't wanna be dependent on it.  
but I can't determine exactly what food I should eat.  
I think I will be healed fast if I have guidelines what to eat.  
I can't determine which veggies or fruits has a low carb.  
I also want to know how much hours of sleep I need.  
How much water I should drink every day.  
Should I take vitamins?  
Is it okay I'll eat chicken, chicken liver and fish?

I'm Kenneth from the Philippines.

Hope you'll help me with this illness Sir.

Thank You. Godbless.

Reply

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**Farshad**  
**AUGUST 17, 2013 AT 6:49 AM**

What should someone who has acid do for relief if you are discouraging taking antacids? I agree with what you have said but also would like a solution to dealing with the discomfort of severe acid reflux etc. Thank you.

Reply

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**Rachel**  
**MAY 15, 2013 AT 11:56 AM**

Your take on this issue has been incredibly eye-opening – thank you. I had been on various PPIs for upwards of ten years after being one of the early diagnosed cases of eosinophilic esophagitis. I could tell my body wasn't getting nutrients, despite the large amounts of natural vitamins I was taking and eating extremely healthy. After reading your revolutionary articles, which made perfect sense to me, I went off my PPI, started taking 1-2 pepsin + HCL tablets with heavy meals, and added a licorice supplement.

My reflux was bad for a little while, but better after a few weeks. However, my stomach must still be very damaged because every time I eat green leafy vegetables or more than a small portion of food, I am violently sick within about 10-15 minutes. Afterward I feel ok. When that happens, I notice I haven't digested meals from as much as a day prior and my acid levels are next to nothing. Do you have any suggestions? Should I be taking more than one-two HCL pills? Is this intolerance to raw veggies normal? Thank you!!

Reply

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**Mike**  
**JUNE 10, 2013 AT 12:02 AM**

Raw legumes are notoriously hard to digest for people with low acid, or stomach problems in general. Try chewing them very well, or better yet supplement them with short chain ones like rutabegas, celery root, etc. I'm no expert, but it sounds like you have the right idea and just need to modify the diet a bit.

Reply

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**Rachel**  
**JUNE 10, 2013 AT 6:37 PM**

Thank you for your response! I'll have to look into short chain veggies. Thankfully, I've actually been fine the past few times I've tried eating salads, since I make sure to take plenty of HCL and chew thoroughly like you said. I've also been taking probiotics and drinking a ton of kombucha that I brew at home, which seem to help a lot. Gluten definitely seems to trigger "heart burn" again, but I certainly don't miss my antacid prescription at ALL 😊

Reply

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**Ernest Barberio**  
**MARCH 27, 2013 AT 1:21 PM**

Hi! I'm just getting off of acifex and starting Hcl tabs. My question is " how long does the average person have to continue taking these tabs. I have been on Acifex for about two years.

Reply

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**Candice**  
**MARCH 1, 2013 AT 3:33 PM**

Dear Shelly – while my problems have not been as great as yours, I've had a lot of success alleviating both IBS and low acid stomach issues (similar symptoms to you) by adding lemon juice/citric acid to my food and eating yogurt and home made kim chee. I believe there are better solutions than citric acid, but that is all that I could get my hands on. Also, limiting consumption of food in the evening and cutting out carbohydrates and dried fruit as well as working out which other food irritate my bowel and not eating them. .

I suggest you read other articles on this site as much of the advice seems to interact to provide a more wholistic solution. I subscribe to the newsletter and find that very good.

Good luck! 😊 C

Reply

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## Shelly

MARCH 1, 2013 AT 8:01 AM

I just read all of your articles last night. I've had problems with ibs in the past and was diagnosed with GERD in November. I still cant get it under control. I had an upper endoscopy and they didn't find anything. I'm taking dexilant, another ppi. My stomach is still a mess. My doctor had me try nexium and Prilosec and they did nothing. I have more nausea and bloating where the esophagus and stomach meet up than I do the heartburn. They first diagnosed me when i would wake up in the middle of the night and cough up a small piece of food. After a couple nights of this I found it odd and called my dr. It is now March and I'm still struggling. I know that stress and anxiety can worsen GERD symptoms and I'm having a lot of that now. Do you have any suggestions? Foods to avoid? Foods I should eat often? I'm really at a loss.

Reply

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## Y.M.

FEBRUARY 13, 2013 AT 4:48 PM

I feared antacids long before reading your articles because it just seemed common-sense to me: restricting stomach acids=poor absorption of nutrients.

I've been reading further into this to know the exact mechanisms because I wanted to be able to defend my positions against scrutiny, and unfortunately I've found just the opposite:

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8568113> (Hypochlorhydria from short-term omeprazole treatment does not inhibit intestinal absorption of calcium, phosphorus, magnesium or zinc from food in humans.)

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/1852094> (Calcium absorption in elderly subjects on high- and low-fiber diets: effect of gastric acidity. – “We conclude that, in humans, the reduction in calcium absorption with high fiber intake is unaffected by gastric pH.”)

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/6707197> (An evaluation of the importance of gastric acid secretion in the absorption of dietary calcium.- ” A large dose of cimetidine, which markedly reduced gastric acid secretion, had no effect on calcium absorption in normal subjects, and an achlorhydric patient with pernicious anemia absorbed calcium normally.”)

I'm not sure why these results are the way they are, but maybe anemia is the cause of mal-absorption, not low stomach acid? What do you think?

Reply

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## Rob Bell

OCTOBER 22, 2012 AT 12:00 PM

Hi Chris, I have found these articles of great importance to me. I have been taking Prevacid for almost 25 years when I was diagnosed with a hiatus hernia. I would love to stop taking Previcid. I eat a primal. diet exclusively for almost 4 months and have lost 30 lbs and 9 inches of belly fat and feel great and for me there is no other way to eat now. I have tried to stop taking Previcid for a day or two but heartburn comes on very quickly and I have to take it again for relief. Is there anything I can do to stop taking the Previcid? I know there is surgery to do the repair but it sounds like even if I get the surgery the symptoms could return from taking the drug for so long?

Reply

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**harold**

**APRIL 27, 2014 AT 6:17 PM**

Rob: I had the surgery you are referring to and it worked for about 9 years. I am now back at square one. If I had it to do over again I wouldn't. Just my opinion.

Reply

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**Susan**

**JANUARY 29, 2016 AT 12:08 PM**

Rob, what you are experiencing is rebound. Your proton pumps which are now not being suppressed by a ppi go into overdrive making Hcl. It is hard I know I tried once to stop taking Prilosec after five years cold turkey and suffered for days and eventually gave up. I gave myself a couple of weeks then tried again that time succeeding! I was kind to myself during the weaning off period with tums and dgl licorice. Hang in there it's well worth it. Reach out if you need support.

Susan

Reply

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**Michelle Rosner**

**OCTOBER 7, 2012 AT 1:46 PM**

Hi Chris –

I've been following your website for a quite while now and recommend your heartburn/gerd section to anyone who even mentions that they have it to me...family members, customers, co-workers, friends, you name it! Now I have a question and I hope you might be willing to answer it. I agree with the logic that acid production reduces as you become older. So the question is, my newborn obviously has some issues with sleeping flat on his back after being the hospital for a week and a half after delivery with a feeding tube down him. I thought that he was adjusting to home life but now it seems to be pretty persistent to me. As of today I am putting a wedge under him so he is elevated like I would be in the bed for acid reflux...it seems to let him sleep a little more calmly? I keep reading on baby forums that he might have acid reflux and the doctors put the baby on medicine. Obviously I am skeptical of acid reducers and was wondering if you had an opinion on what the culprit might be and how to fix for the long term or if you know what medicine it is the doctors would prescribe him in advance. I appreciate any input you may have.

Thanks,  
Michelle

Reply

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**Michelle Rosner**

**OCTOBER 7, 2012 AT 1:58 PM**

Of course we are breastfeeding and I have to supplement with Neosure for preemies because he is a ferocious eater since they sent him home. thanks.

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**  
OCTOBER 7, 2012 AT 5:41 PM

In infants reflux is most often due to sensitivity to something mom is eating. Try removing dairy and gluten first; if that doesn't help, soy, citrus, nightshades, onions, garlic and beans are other common culprits.

Reply

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**Michelle Rosner**  
OCTOBER 7, 2012 AT 5:50 PM

I appreciate your timely response! I love dairy so great place to start. Thanks!

Reply

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**Finn**  
AUGUST 30, 2012 AT 3:06 AM

What about magnesium and the absorption of other mineral salts being suppressed? I got terrible headaches when I took Nexium and other PPIs for gastritis a few years ago (a biopsy supposedly ruled out H Pylori), the doc switched me to Zantac and the headaches came back. He said that two different meds couldn't cause the same symptoms. I stopped the meds and healed my gastritis through diet, and no-alcohol (wine and champagne seemed to really irritate my stomach). And no more headaches.

Then when I was pregnant a year or so later I started getting headaches again, a midwife suggested I start getting more mineral salts from soup broths and this naturally salty bottled spring water you get in France. Well I needed 4 bottles of this water a day to keep the headaches at bay, I eventually found a chelated mineral supplement that worked instead. And once I stopped breast-feeding I was able to stop the supplements. This mineral salts cure for headaches led me to suspect a link with the antacid drugs.

I'm now on the Gaps diet that I initially started to heal chronic urinary and kidney infections and hopefully food allergies, namely gluten. On hot days I still find I need an electrolyte drink for headaches. I now dilute himalayan crystal salts in water with some lemon (I hope I'm not taking too much salt).

I wonder if there are other bacteria or yeasts that cause gastritis and GERD symptoms? Like Candida for example? I find its the candida type diet in combination with GAPS that helps settle my acid stomach symptoms the quickest. For example, if I've cheated on GAPS with a little bit of starch (some rice crackers or a tiny bit of sugar) and had wine with dinner a few days in a row my stomach can get a bit acidic again. Lots of homemade chicken broth and some raw vegetables really sorts me out quickly. I had acid stomach issues on the GAPS intro diet when I was eating a lot of boiled meat and cooked vegetables and found that I needed some raw alkaline veggies to feel better.

Reply

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**M**  
SEPTEMBER 1, 2012 AT 5:25 AM

Finn,

How did you solve your gastritis through diet. What exactly you avoided and what you included in your diet? Will Bone-broth, Gelatin supplements help? I was diagnosed with antral gastritis few months ago and was prescribed a month-long Nexium course. Even after completing it, am still experiencing issues on and off.

Reply

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**Doug S.**

**AUGUST 21, 2012 AT 10:23 AM**

“In one study, 35 of 40 people (80 percent)”

Er... that would be 87.5%, I believe.

Reading my way through this series of posts, but it seems helpful so far. I'm hoping to avoid taking Prilosec for the rest of my life – I'm sure there's a better solution.

Reply

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**Tony Cooper**

**AUGUST 6, 2012 AT 5:57 AM**

What alternative to surgery is there for someone who has no LES at all, which was confirmed years ago by an upper GI? When I'm not taking my Nexium, I'm miserable with frequent gastric issues, regardless the food I eat.

Reply

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**Diane panrucker**

**JULY 17, 2012 AT 10:34 AM**

Hi Chris I have had a gastric bypass and I have been told I have to take vitamins iron and calcim twice aday is there anything I can take without taking 3 different pills

Reply

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**daniel dunkley**

**JUNE 19, 2012 AT 1:25 AM**

am wondering if taking a product called carbgest would help, as this product is designed to help digest carbohydrates

Reply

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**Candice**

**MAY 1, 2012 AT 3:30 AM**

I've found sprinkling citric acid on my meals seems to prevent some excessive gas and nausea after eating breakfast. Chris – is adding HCl much better than adding citric acid? Thanks Candice

Reply

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**Raj**

**APRIL 7, 2012 AT 4:05 PM**

Is it proven that mastic gum kills h pylori?

Reply

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**Stephen Lonefeather**

**APRIL 6, 2012 AT 1:58 PM**

Is it correct that if I take methylcobalimin in place of cyanocobalimin that my body will not need to separate the cyanide from the good stuff. If this is correct then why bother to take the poisonous cyanide type B12 and why aren't you promoting that change??

Reply

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**Brett**

**FEBRUARY 22, 2012 AT 9:57 PM**

Not sure if you're still monitoring this post from 2010, but I was hoping you could give me your opinion on a related issue. I have been diagnosed with cholinergic urticaria (heat induced hives), and have been taking Zantac and Zyrtec daily to control that condition for between 6-7 years. This article has caused me some concern, because for the last 6 months I have been dealing with serious dry mouth issues, dermatitis, and an overgrowth of facial and scalp yeast. My dermatologist gave me both oral and cream-based ketoconazole, which helps, but the problem comes right back once I stop taking the keto. Based on your article, it seems like the problem may be related to the fact that I've taken Zantac for so many years. The problem, obviously, is that if I stop taking Zantac, the heat-induced hives come right back. Any thoughts/comments would be appreciated.

Reply

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**Deezer**

**DECEMBER 26, 2011 AT 9:21 AM**

If acid is helpful to the stomach, and low stomach acid is the cause of GERD, why do acidic foods tend to make heartburn/GERD worse?

Reply

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**Patricia Elden**

**NOVEMBER 9, 2011 AT 11:02 AM**

Hi, I was referred to you by my boss, a Dept Chair. who is a total vegan etc. Have had GI problems for years, including a GI bleed in the 80's. I understand your reasoning for limiting the PPI's but especially among the elderly on blood thinners, etc, there is a problem with bleeds.. My main question concerns abnormal "giant" cells in the small intestine, with a hx of IBS, GI bleed, diabetes, et al. The area referenced has caused discomfort for two months now. That is with and without PPI, tagamet, pain med, etc. Thyroid is low normal, on metformin. Have asked for B12, internist sees no need. I understand there is now a correlation of brain to bowel, and would a hx of inc. fluids, cord compression, and s/p surg for same contribute to this ongoing bowel irritation?? I realize there is alot in here but it is the correlation of brain, bowel I am most interested in. Thanks for any insight. PElden

Reply

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**Jacquelyn Jones**  
**OCTOBER 18, 2011 AT 6:41 PM**

I am a 60 year old female that has suffered with restless legs syndrome and upper airways resistance syndrome for decades. Even though I have never told them that I have heartburn, doctors insist that I have GERD. Recently, I gave in and stated taking Protonix. I have unintentional weight loss (due to early satiety) at a rate of one pound a week and have lost over 10% of my body weight. Since starting taking proton inhibitor I feel as if my body isn't receiving any nutrition. (I have been checked for cancer). Thanks for the article on proton inhibitors because I now have a reason to review the effects of this prescription with my doctors.

Reply

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**Ruth**  
**SEPTEMBER 13, 2011 AT 6:12 PM**

What about supplementing with Betaine HCl and see if that works by increasing stomach acid?

Reply

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**Donna**  
**SEPTEMBER 14, 2010 AT 6:25 AM**

Chris, I am beside myself and don't know what to do. My 89 year old uncle is ailing and I believe it is due to Prilosec. He was complaining of occasional heartburn several months ago so his doctor put him on Prilosec 40mg. in a.m. and Pepcid in p.m. Over the last few weeks he has been having severe stomach pains, ie. burning to the point that he has gone to the ER. What do they do...endoscopy...which showed nothing. Hence, more prilosec, carafate, and dilaudid. He has lost weight over the this time because he can barely eat without being in pain. He drinks a lot of milk (whole milk) thinking that it might help, but, of course, it doesn't and his arthritis, whether rheumatoid or osteo seems to be much worse. He lies down most of the time because he is so weak and his joints hurt so bad when he's up. Prior to all of this, he could outwalk me at the grocery store. I have always been skeptical of long term antacids. I'm also aware that as we age, we tend to produce less stomach acid anyway. So now that acid production in my uncle is virtually stopped, it's no wonder he's getting very sick. But how do I convince him (you know, old people believe everything their doctor's say without question and I question everything)and his doctor that he's killing him albeit unintentionally? I'm having a real hard time just standing by watching this happen to an otherwise relatively healthy man. HELP, PLEASE!

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**  
**SEPTEMBER 14, 2010 AT 7:46 AM**

Donna: I empathize with your plight, but unfortunately I don't have an easy answer. The best we can do is educate and inform, but from there people have to make their own choices. You could try getting him a copy of Dr. Wright's book called Why Stomach Acid is Good For You. He's an M.D., so perhaps your uncle would take it more seriously.

Reply

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**Marcus Kool**

**APRIL 3, 2014 AT 10:13 AM**

Dr John Bergman wrote a book on how to REVERSE arthritis. You can also look at one of his videos on Youtube:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUgsGsPviY>

I like Dr Bergman a lot: he explains very well what is the CAUSE and how to cure.

Reply

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**Tom**  
**MAY 11, 2010 AT 5:33 AM**

Chris:

I did not make my point clearly, sorry.

What I am saying is that yoga and the other techniques mentioned can help with this problem in the way that resting, elevating, and using ice on a sprained toe can help with that problem.

Yoga may not be the bottom line on GERD, but it can help alleviate an instance of the problem and the awareness can make people better understand what is triggering the problem.

Also, thanks for this series and your blog in general. They are very good.

Reply

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**Tom**  
**MAY 9, 2010 AT 12:09 PM**

I may have missed it, but I did not see something else worth mentioning about GERD.

In some (many) people, the valve between the esophagus and stomach does not close properly or quickly enough. This causes stomach acids to enter the esophagus and cause the burning discomfort.

This problem can be dealt with by some yogic practices, by paying attention to that area, and also by not going to be or lying down with food in the stomach.

If you get a bad case of GERD in the middle of the night, often it is due to food in the stomach not being able to drain out. Just sit up for a while and it will leave the stomach and the GERD incident will be over.

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**  
**MAY 9, 2010 AT 12:16 PM**

Tom,

The entire series is about why the LES malfunctions: because of excess carbohydrates and low stomach acid.

Reply

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**Marcus Kool**  
JANUARY 25, 2014 AT 1:25 PM

Hi Chris,  
My wife has this problem for over 20 years.  
Can you give a reference to how to cure LES malfunctions?  
Thanks very much  
Marcus

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**  
APRIL 16, 2010 AT 10:41 AM

**Final article** in the series is up.

Also, the entire series as well as recommendations for books and offsite articles can be found **here**.

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**  
APRIL 12, 2010 AT 12:16 PM

Hi folks,

The **continuation** of this article (Part B) is now up.

Reply

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**Glynis**  
MARCH 13, 2012 AT 3:36 PM

Can you comment on the rebound of acid after stopping ppi's. If we assume that long term ppi use may result in bacterial overgrowth, does the excess of rebound kill the bacteria or should we take antibiotic to do so? Also, how to protect the lower esophagus while recovering from ppi influences?

Reply

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**Glynis**

**MARCH 14, 2012 AT 7:20 AM**

Another question or two. When you stop ppi's after several years of treatment, does the les actually recover and start to function properly again? If so, how long might it take to transition back to normal? How risky is the acid reflux experience during this transition for Barretts cells?

Reply

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**Todd S.**

**APRIL 12, 2010 AT 7:55 AM**

This is a fantastic series of articles. I'd like to print them out and give them to my father, if you don't mind. He's type 1 diabetic and has been on PPI's for years now.

My own experiences with GERD (or, as I called it "chronic heartburn" since I never went to get diagnosed) fall in-line exactly with what you have described in this series. Most notably, the food causes of my heartburn as I found through my own experiments of eliminating certain foods: sugars, starches, and grains. Wheat and sugar being the two biggest culprits for me.

A few months ago I embarked on a paleo-esque plan à la Mark Sisson's "Primal Blueprint". Within 72 hours of eliminating grains and sugars from my diet, my heartburn that kept me up 3-4 hours per night was gone. Completely.

Now, I've heard of not drinking during meals to improve digestion. How long is it recommended to wait after the meal before drinking? Also, I have a habit of mixing a bit of apple cider vinegar in a glass of water and drinking it. Not necessarily at meal time, but just throughout the day. I actually like the taste and find it quite refreshing. What impact would this have on my stomach acid production?

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**

**APRIL 12, 2010 AT 8:18 AM**

Hi Todd,

Please feel free to print the articles and give them to your father. That's what this blog is all about! Thank you for asking, though.

I wouldn't drink much liquid for 1-2 hours after eating, to give the stomach a chance to empty. The exception would be hot herbal teas that promote digestion, like fennel and peppermint.

Apple cider vinegar is an old home remedy for indigestion. I'm planning on mentioning it in the upcoming treatment article. I think a small amount before meals, mixed with some warm or room temperature water, can be helpful.

Reply

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**research247**

**DECEMBER 14, 2011 AT 7:25 PM**

I am new to this information. My recent research suggests peppermint is a trigger for GERD so we should avoid it. Ginger might be a better choice?

Reply

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## Sheila

SEPTEMBER 24, 2013 AT 8:10 AM

Bacterial overgrowth in throat; tongue/throat/burning pain for 4 months. Taking Prilosec, probiotic, sinus rinse, Allegra, scrapping tongue with vinegar. No thrush. No heartburn. Small burping often. Lipoma on right Side of abdomen. Bacteria seen in throat. Ent says allergies- right side limited opening (old sinus surgery scaring). Ct scan said no sinusites.constipation often. Passed from doctor to doctor. Dentist sees mouth is fine, drainage and bacteria in throat area. Visable Bacteria will move to tongue in some days. Tip of tongue always bothersome. Nothing visable. Often bloated. Often use gasx. Add menaoouse. Tried eating nothing, changing foods, stopping meds, taking others. Thoughts? Not stomach pain, it's felt in mouth. And bacteria overgrowth seen in throat. I've had blood work done. Only bilirubin flagged. Have not seen a gastro doctor. Plan to next week. But feel like I'm brushed off by many doctors. I believe because they just don't know what to do. Had oral swab done. (After being treated for thrush for a 6 weeks- found didn't have it) – bacterial overgrowth. Hurts & depressing. Always feel mouth/tongue hurt- burning sensation. On one has suggested antibiotics.

Reply

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## Shannon Scalo

OCTOBER 23, 2013 AT 3:13 PM

I'm sorry to hear your having all these problems you should have your whole digestive system checked for a possible blockage. If that doesn't come to anything I would get mchecked for lupus.

Reply

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## Rosemarie

MARCH 30, 2014 AT 3:13 AM

Have you tried a technique called oil-pulling? Sounds kooky, but when I have had serious inflammation issues in my mouth, I have been able to get well by doing this. It is simple but profound: you swish coconut oil in your mouth for 20-30 minutes and then spit it in the trash. Even our medical plan is now recommending it. I believe if you could try this for a few weeks you would see improvement.

Reply

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## Jackie

APRIL 2, 2014 AT 3:42 PM

Oil pulling is brilliant, when I do this as part of my morning routine, it definitely makes a difference. I always start my mornings with a pint of warm water with a squeeze of fresh lemon juice, turmeric powder and root ginger. My doctor has just prescribed Gavison, an antacid for what we think is heartburn, but after doing some research, I'm going to take raw apple cider vinegar (2 tablespoons) 10 minutes before each meal and not drink any liquid until an hour after my meals. Will avoid wheat, dairy and sugar, not sure about grains, maybe I should switch to Paleo type eating. Thank you so much for all the brilliant sharing and information. "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food" Hippocrates was so wise...

Reply

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**kilton**

**APRIL 11, 2010 AT 5:44 AM**

Any idea how water consumption affects stomach acidity? Maybe we shouldn't be drinking with meals?

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**

**APRIL 11, 2010 AT 9:18 AM**

Consuming liquid during meals dilutes the concentration of stomach acid, impairing digestion. It's best not to drink liquid during meals for that reason – especially water. A few sips of wine probably won't hurt.

Reply

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**Ginny**

**JANUARY 8, 2014 AT 3:33 PM**

Ok, so don't drink water with meals. But how about overall water consumption taken correctly – as in 1 hour before a meal and 2 to 3 hours after a meal? I used to get most of my daily water intake (I'm not even kidding) from Pepsi (caffeine + sugar) and coffee/juice/milk. Yet Pepsi never caused heartburn, only milk and coffee (or just plain water when and if I ever drank it) did.

I heard it argued that taking in insufficient amounts of water can reduce the overall amount of stomach acid since the acid contains water. Is that correct? That's what the author of "The Body's Many Cries for Water" says.

Also, someone said that the content of chlorine in the water may also be responsible for heartburn. I'm wondering if that's true, since Pepsi never caused heartburn, but water – not even a full 8 ounces – still to this day causes heartburn. I avoid it even though I know I should drink it.

Will you point me to a link where I can gain some better understanding here?

Thanks!

Reply

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**Eve M.**

**APRIL 11, 2010 AT 12:34 AM**

On an average day my carb intake is probably below 50 grams, often well below. I haven't seen a consistent pattern, to be honest. Some of the worst pain was during a week when I was trying out some intermittent fasting and sticking to eating small amounts of high-quality fats. But then, as admitted in the earlier thread, I do like the occasional drink! It sounds like I'm going to have to eliminate the gin martinis and scotches, or at least track them carefully to see how they contribute, and experiment with probiotics and HCL/pepsin supplementation if the improvement doesn't continue. Thanks again.

Reply

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**Eve M.**

**APRIL 10, 2010 AT 7:07 PM**

I've been following this series with keen interest; thanks! As a result of reading the first couple of installments, I rashly (boldly?) went off my Prilosec OTC regimen of 18 months' duration, and after a couple of slightly difficult days, have had no significant heartburn.

Both on the PPI and still occasionally off it, however, I do have stomach pains (which sometimes translate into scary "chest pains" in the middle of the night) that are helped by antigas meds (like dimethicone). Do you suppose the story is as simple as "Ingest *anything* that creates IAP, and you will need to tamp down abdominal gas to keep the LES closed"?

(By the way, in my comment on Part 1, I mentioned planning to get an upper endoscopy. I'm now thinking of scrapping that part of the plan. 😊)

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**

**APRIL 10, 2010 AT 7:36 PM**

Eve,

Congratulations! It certainly sounds like your pain and heartburn are being caused by gas. As I mentioned in the previous articles, that is probably caused by maldigestion of carbohydrate. What is your carb intake like at present? I'll be writing more about how to treat GERD naturally soon, but in the meantime I'd recommend a period of strict carbohydrate restriction, HCL w/pepsin and a high quality probiotic (foods are best, sauerkraut, kombucha, kefir, etc.). Smaller meals can also be helpful as you make the adjustment.

Reply

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**malihai**

**MARCH 8, 2014 AT 10:31 AM**

I take offense to your saying Indian food causes acid problems. There are millions of Americans who do not eat Indian food and still have the problems. There are millions of Indians who eat there food and do not have the problem. I don't know if you wrote it in jest or meant it seriously.  
malihai.

Reply

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**Forty2**

**APRIL 10, 2010 AT 6:32 PM**

I have been off Aciphex for almost two weeks now. Other than a mild twinge of burn, I'm fine.

Reply

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**Chris Kresser**

**APRIL 10, 2010 AT 6:39 PM**

Fantastic!

Reply

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**Amanda Morales**  
NOVEMBER 11, 2013 AT 12:47 PM

So for someone like me who has been on ppi's long term and was just diagnosed with h. Pylori with esophagitis and erosive gastritis and just got done the triple therapy antibiotic treatment for it... would it be smart to just stop ppi's? I do still have some acid reflux going in. And they continue to treat me with the ppi's. I also have been low on b12 and recently needed 2 b12 injections. Should I stop ppi treatment and let stomach acid return to normal?

Reply

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**Terry**  
DECEMBER 3, 2013 AT 7:10 AM

Hi Amanda,

I was prescribed (off handily) Omeprazole PPI by a locum doctor for acid reflux and a suspected Stomach ulcer. I was to take them for 6 weeks, but was handed a prescription for 12 weeks and was told to come back if I needed more. Strange I thought, but reading this article and going by my experience I now understand why. Two weeks into the course my stomach pain had gone, great, I thought, but I still had 4 weeks left to go, after another two weeks I started to feel unwell in general. I was bloated most of the day and had diarrhoea. I didn't know what to think. I thought I was getting better. Over the next few days I noticed my urine was cloudy, my kidneys ached and I had a sore throat. I don't know why, but something made me feel like the Omeprazole was the problem and found this site. After viewing this article I went to my doctor. He agreed that I should stop taking the Omeprazole. That was about two weeks ago. My symptoms didn't go away at first and my stomach upset got a bit worse in the first few days, but I can happily say that for the first time in ages I feel normal. I changed my diet slightly, made sure I ate as early as I can and cut down on alcohol. I have more energy and my digestive system seems to have returned to normal. Based on this I think a lot of people could do with trying methods like diet changes etc. Stomach Acid is immensely important, otherwise why would we be made to have it? I found that not eating breakfast or eating my breakfast too late made me reflux. I ate breakfast within 20 minutes of waking up, even though I didn't want to, but it's cured my reflex (hopefully). I realise that everyone is different, but I hope you can overcome this problem. And as always...discuss with your GP before doing anything.

Reply

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**Barbara**  
JANUARY 5, 2014 AT 10:55 AM

I would like to know also if I should stop taking antacids. I had the same treatment for h pylori.

Reply

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**nickole**  
APRIL 27, 2014 AT 3:40 PM

Hi, I too was told I have hp pylori. I've done a lot of research. Apparently most of us have it, when its over production is when it becomes a problem. I would not take antibiotics or antacids. I'm taking mastic gum, Manuka honey, colloidal silver 500pp 3x a day, LOTS and LOTS of cabbage juice with lemon, cucumber, aloe juice, celery. Eating very lite, lots of fruits and veggies. Have been on

all this stuff for a week, and surp  
Surprise, no more heartburn!! Gona try pine nut oil too. Gonna stay on this diet for a couple months  
and see how it gose so far feeling GREAT!!!

Reply

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**nickole**  
**APRIL 27, 2014 AT 3:46 PM**

Forgot to mention I'm also taking HCL afer ever meal.

Reply

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**Dance & Wellness Coach G.**  
**JUNE 17, 2014 AT 6:07 PM**

I strongly agree from own experience. Stay away from Antibiotics, too, as they kill other "good bacteria" disturbing the pH balance thus creating new problemsI just went to the Dr. today because I finally recognize the issue after ignoring it for about 6 months. I know exactly what caused the problem:

Over 20 years ago I was diagnosed with acid reflux receiving acid blockers, threat of surgery, etc. and fixed it by simply adjusting my diet.

Ever since then I had been eating a fairly healthy, balanced diet in order to maintain energy levels I needed for teaching dancing and working out.

Then two years ago I moved in with friends for 9 months waiting for a short sale house. I adjusted to their household and started eating almost vegan. Even though their diet was organic it was unbalanced. All carbs, not enough protein. The first thing I noticed about 6 months into it, that my muscle definition and tone decreased significantly. The following year I got sick thus exercising even less and my diet worsened.: I ate more processed, high carb foods, still low protein as I had gotten accustomed to that change. The initial illness and it's radical treatment with a series of potent antibiotics (infection from a spider bite) in combination with the stress from it, no exercise and poor diet caused me to age visibly at an alarming rate within just a year. (Loss of elasticity of skin and facial muscles, decreased eye sight, acid reflux, spider and varicose veins, you name it.)

Bottom line: As the article indicates: diet is a key factor in eliminating the problem. If you are experiencing serious symptoms, your pH balance, your nutrient absorb-ability, etc. are already out off whack.

I have an issue with self discipline, so today I am eating pie, but will start over tomorrow:

First I will alter my diet, drink chamomile tea (soothes inflamed lining) and take pro-biotics . Also I am planning on changing my sleep patterns and adding more thorough stretching to my dancing, which will decrease stress levels. All of the above will help absorb-ability of nutrients, minerals and vitamins which will boost my endorphin production and hormone balance. As a result I will feel more energetic and healthier, which will help me with a more positive overall view of things. My body, which is designed to do so, might recover on it's own once again...

Reply

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**angela D,amico**  
**APRIL 25, 2014 AT 10:19 AM**

So, how can We cure or prevent excessive acid??? Excessive acid us very dangerous too....

Reply

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**nickole**  
**APRIL 27, 2014 AT 3:44 PM**

Most of time the problem is an under production of acid, and not tye other way as one may think. I'm also taking HCL. Changed my diet as I mentioned above, and so far feeling great. No anicids.

Reply

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**nickole**  
**APRIL 27, 2014 AT 3:44 PM**

Most of time the problem is an under production of acid, and not tye other way as one may think. I'm also taking HCL. Changed my diet as I mentioned above.

Reply

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**ksmurty**  
**MARCH 14, 2014 AT 6:17 AM**

I can say with certainty that my ability to digest food and my bone strength have gone down significantly after using ppi's and gelusil etc. thanks for the article.

Reply

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**Meghan**  
**JULY 13, 2014 AT 11:59 AM**

What is your diet Like? I am curious because I have been on aciphex for 3 years now and so far its been the best medicine I have used. I am really interested in not taken meds forever!!

Reply

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