



Heartburn, Acid Reflux or GERD Stop the Treatment Madness!

By *Tricia Talerico, D.C., MS, Nutr.*

It is estimated that 15 to 20 million Americans use proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) like Prilosec, Prevacid and Nexium to treat heartburn, acid reflux, GERD or peptic ulcer disease. These PPIs are among the most widely overprescribed and misused drugs today, with annual pharmaceutical sales near \$14 billion! These drugs were never intended to treat common heartburn as they were initially designed to treat conditions like bleeding ulcers, Zollinger-Ellison Syndrome (a rare condition that causes your stomach to produce excess acid) and severe acid reflux, where an endoscopy confirms that one's esophagus has been damaged. Acid reflux is not a disease where your stomach produces too much acid, it is actually an issue wherein the stomach acid comes back through the lower esophageal sphincter, as in cases of hiatal hernias. Heartburn is the primary symptom of acid reflux. This "heartburn" is most bothersome at night, after eating a large meal, bending over, lifting or lying down. In addition to heartburn, acid reflux can result in hoarseness, a feeling of food stuck in your throat, tightness in your throat, dental problems, bad breath and asthma.

Much research has been done on the *Helicobacter pylori* organism (*H. pylori*) in connection with acid reflux. This bacteria results in a chronic, low-level inflammation of the stomach lining and is a major factor in producing the symptoms of acid reflux. So, using PPIs to suppress stomach acid does not treat the problem, only the symptoms. When we suppress stomach acid, we decrease the body's ability to kill this bacteria and so, we perpetuate the problem.

PPIs have been linked to increased risk for many serious health conditions, such as chronic kidney disease, pneumonia, osteoporosis, hip fractures, dementia, heart disease and heart attacks. People who use PPIs indefinitely often develop a

dependence on them, so it is important to wean yourself off them gradually. If you try to stop these medications cold turkey, your heartburn symptoms will be severe. You can gradually lower your dose of the PPI until you get down to the lowest dose. Then you can start substituting with an over-the-counter H2 blocker like Zantac or Tagamet. Gradually wean yourself off the H2 blocker over a period of several weeks. As you do this, you can start making some lifestyle modifications, like eliminating caffeine, alcohol and nicotine. You'll want to encourage your body to make its own HCL (hydrochloric acid), so using a high quality sea salt (Himalayan) supplies the chloride, as well as 80 other trace minerals. You can also use a quality supplemental betaine HCL, as it helps your stomach kill the *H. pylori* bacteria. Get your Vitamin D levels checked, as Vitamin D helps to increase production of antimicrobial peptides. Exercise, eliminate processed foods and sugars from your diet. Most of all, do NOT use antibiotics to kill the *H. pylori* bacteria.

Take control of your health and start eliminating some of the useless medications that we are prescribed every day. We are responsible for our own health and longevity, however, sometimes we all need a little help and guidance along the way.



**IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH...
IMPROVE YOUR LIFE!**

- ↓ Body Fat
- ↓ Diabetes
- ↓ Cholesterol
- ↓ Hormonal Imbalances
- ↓ Metabolic Syndrome
- ↓ Gluten Allergies
- ↓ Chronic Fatigue
- ↓ Gut Imbalances

Longevity is not a gift, it has to be earned.
Discover a medication-free approach to better health, better energy and longevity. **ARE YOU READY?**

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