



GERD HEALTH PLAN

The following health plan is a list of interventions that have been proven to help minimize and manage symptoms of Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease [GERD]. There are many references throughout this health plan to help you find more in-depth information on the website about different listed interventions. If you have not been able to find all the help you need on the website, please use the “CONTACT US” form on the HOME page to ask for an appointment with a Lifestyle & Nutrition Consultant.

LIFESTYLE HABITS HELP MINIMIZE GERD SYMPTOMS

Here is a list of lifestyle habits that help minimized symptoms of GERD. As you read through the list, highlight all the habits you are already doing. Then go back through the list and put a check mark by the habits that you would like to try to adopt.

- Quit smoking, if you are a smoker (nicotine relaxes the lower esophageal sphincter [LES])
- Elevate the head of your bed 6 inches
- Wait 3 to 4 hours after eating supper before going to bed
- Achieve a healthy weight
- Manage stress and anxiety [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Manage Stress* link which will take you to the *Manage Stress* page.]
- Practice healing visualizations [For more information go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and click on the *Think Positive* link which will take you to the *Think Positive* page.]

NUTRITION HABITS HELP MINIMIZE GERD SYMPTOMS

Here is a list of nutrition habits that help minimized symptoms of GERD. As you read through the list, highlight all the habits you are already doing. Then go back through the list and put a check mark by the habits that you would like to try to adopt.

GENERAL NUTRITION HABITS:

- Eat small meals and have snacks between meals

- Eat slow, chew food thoroughly, and be relaxed during meals and snacks
- Chew sugar-free gum, or suck on sugar-free lozenges or hard candy
- Drink a gallon (128 oz) of water a day

AVOID FOODS/HERBS THAT RELAX THE LES:

- Peppermint
- Fats
- Caffeine containing beverages
- Chocolate
- Alcohol
- Garlic and onions

AVOID FOODS/HERBS THAT IRRITATE THE LINING OF THE ESOPHAGUS:

- Citric fruits
- Tomatoes and tomato products
- Hot spices
- Alcohol

AVOID SUBSTANCES THAT INCREASE ACID PRODUCTION IN THE STOMACH:

- Caffeine

AVOID SUBSTANCES THAT CAUSE BLOATING:

- Soda pop
- Foods that bloating (individualized)

HELP WITH CHANGING HEALTH HABITS

Changing health habits can be challenging. *Positive Patterns for Life* offers a variety of methods, skills and tools to help support you during your habit change journey. One of the most helpful tools found on the website is the *Positive Patterns for Life Goals Chart*. It has blank spaces for you to write in your new habits that you want to work on adopting. It has instructions to guide you on how to best use the goals chart and encouraging quotes to help you stay motivated during your health improvement journey. Make sure to check out all the resources in the *Changing Health Habits* section at the bottom of the THRIVE page at <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive>.

If you don't find the help you need in the *Changing Health Habits* section, schedule an appointment with a Lifestyle & Nutrition Consultant by using the "Contact Us."

KEY SUPPLEMENTS CAN HELP HEAL THE ESOPHAGUS

Here is a list of key supplements that can help heal the esophagus. As you read through the list, highlight all the supplements that you are already taking. Then go back through the list and put a check mark by the supplements that you would like to try.

PLEASE NOTE – Before taking any herbal supplement, seek information from a reliable source as to whether the herb may react with any medications you are taking. Reliable sources may include your pharmacist, a prescription drug book, or you can use the “CONTACT US” form on the website to seek guidance from our Nutrition Consultant. An asterisk in front of a supplement will indicate that is an herbal products.

- L-Glutamine (amino acid)
- * DGL (Deglycyrrhizinated Licorice)
- Zinc carnosine
- Omega 3 fatty acid [For more information about the many benefits of omega 3 fatty acids go to <https://positivepatterns4life.com/thrive> and see *Eat Healthy*]
- * Ginger (anti-inflammatory and antioxidant)
- * Turmeric (anti-inflammatory and antioxidant)
- * Slippery elm (mucilaginous herb)
- * Marshmallow (mucilaginous herb)
- * Meadowsweet (anti-inflammatory and mucilaginous herb)
- Digestive enzymes – these can facilitate a more rapid emptying of the stomach, therefore decreasing pressure on the LES

MEDICATIONS THAT RELAX THE LES AND/OR CAUSE HEART BURN

Here is a list of medications that relax the LES and/or cause heart burn. Most of these are prescription medications with the exception of over-the-counter NSAIDs like Naprosyn, Advil, and Aspirin. Motrin and Celebrex are examples of prescription NSAIDs. As your read through the list put a check mark by any of these medications that you are taking. Avoid taking over-the-counter NSAIDs. If you are on any of these prescription medications, your doctor will probably want you to stay on them. Just be aware they can contribute to worsening symptoms of GERD.

- NSAIDs
- Steroids (i.e. prednisone)
- Birth control pills
- Diazepam (antianxiety and anticonvulsive)
- Nicotine (smoking cessation intervention)

- Nitroglycerine (heart medication)
- Progesterone (hormone)
- Provera (contraceptive)
- Theophylline (manage reactive airway)

REFERENCES

1. Lipski, Elizabeth. (2012) *Digestive Wellness Strengthen the Immune System and Prevent Disease Through Healthy Digestion*. (Fourth Edition). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Books.
2. Murry, Michael. (1996) *The Encyclopedia of Natural Supplements*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.
3. Murry, Michael, Pizzorno, Joseph. (2012) *The Encyclopedia of Natural Medicine*. (Third Edition). New York, NY: Atria Paperback.
4. Rakel, David. (2013) *Integrative Medicine*. (Fourth Edition). Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier.