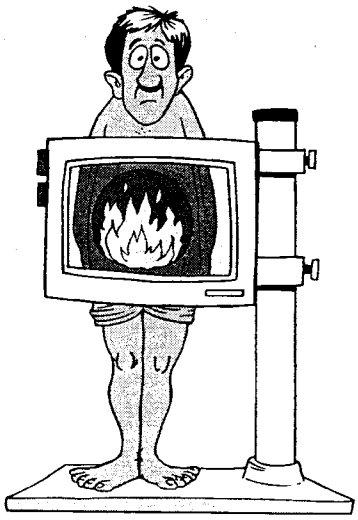
Don't Block That Acid!

Natural Solutions to the Problems of Heartburn, Acid Indigestion, Acid Reflux and GERD



If you watch the TV commercials for acid blockers and antacid medications, you might get the idea that stomach acid is a bad thing. Of course, if you've ever had acid indigestion, heartburn, acid reflux or GERD (Gastro-Esophageal Reflux Disorder) it might *feel* like the acid in your stomach is a bad thing! This is why millions of Americans take antacids or acid blockers regularly, and these medications work in the sense that they bring a temporary relief from the pain and discomfort.

The problem is that this relief is only temporary, and in the long run does a lot more harm than good. Here's why.

The stomach does secrete acid—a very potent acid known as hydrochloric acid (HCl). It does this because the body needs this acid to function properly. Hydrochloric acid performs several very useful functions in the body. First, in combination with the stomach enzyme, pepsin, it is essential for breaking down (or digesting) protein. Without HCl, the body cannot utilize the protein in the foods you eat!

But, that's only the beginning. The acid in your stomach is part of your immune system. One of the functions of HCl is to destroy the bacteria, fungus, viruses and parasites that may be present in the food you eat. HCl causes cells to swell and burst, which will effectively kill just about any microbe present in your food. So, when you neutralize or block HCl production, you are making yourself more susceptible to infections.

HCl is also essential for the absorption of many minerals, including calcium, magnesium, zinc, copper and iron. So, without HCl, you can't absorb the calcium and other minerals your bones and joints need to stay strong. This increases your risk of arthritis and osteoporosis. And that's just the beginning, because these same minerals are needed in hundreds of other body structures and functions.

Ironically, some antacids are actually marketed as being sources of calcium, but this simply isn't true. These antacids contain calcium carbonate (also known as chalk). This form of calcium neutralizes stomach acid and doesn't bind properly to be absorbed into bones and other tissues. Instead, it raises the level of free calcium in the body, which makes a person more susceptible to kidney stones, bone spurs and other forms of calcification.

Finally, HCl production is part of the process of pH regulation in the body. The body uses HCl as one means of helping the tissues to stay more alkaline. When one suppresses HCl production, it makes the body more acidic. This is why antacids, acid blockers and proton pump inhibitors ultimately make the problem worse. The body tries to create more HCl to lower the pH of the body and the person uses more medication to try to block the acid, which starts a vicious downhill spiral of digestive health.

Obviously, blocking or neutralizing stomach acid isn't the solution. Fortunately, there are ways of permanently correcting the underlying causes of acid indigestion.

Learn about these real causes and how to solve them inside...

SUNSHINE SHARING

Your guide to better health the natural way.

Vol. 18 No. 11

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