

Avoid Lying Down After Eating

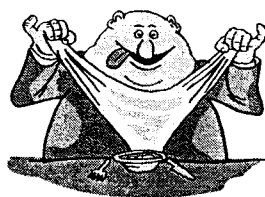
When you lie down with a full stomach, it increases pressure on the LES, the valve at the top of the stomach. This means it isn't a good idea to eat large meals late in the evening, especially within three to four hours of bedtime. A good rule to follow is "breakfast like a king (or queen), lunch like a prince (or princess) and supper like a pauper." Starting the day with your heaviest protein meal is a good idea because HCl production (and the production of digestive enzymes) is highest in the morning, so your food will digest better. Following this advice also helps you lose weight.

A related problem is wearing clothes that are too tight. Slouching when sitting after eating can also put more pressure on the LES.

Most people with chronic acid reflux or GERD have a problem with a hiatal hernia, which puts constant pressure on the LES. If you have problems taking a deep abdominal breath, have yourself checked for this very common and frequently overlooked problem. See sidebar for more information.

Watch What You Eat

Pay attention to foods that cause acid indigestion and acid reflux when you eat them. This is a sign that your body has a hard time digesting these foods. Avoid them, or at least limit yourself to very small portions. Common culprits are greasy, fried foods, overcooked and processed meats, grains and other starchy foods mixed with proteins and highly processed foods. However, the exact foods, which trigger problems for people, vary. Note the foods that are a problem for you and stop eating them or at least try taking extra digestive enzymes when you do.



Take Digestive Enzymes

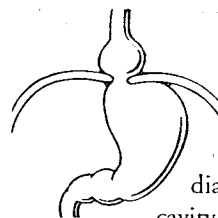
As we have already indicated, most people older than 50 have a deficiency of HCl and other digestive secretions. This deficiency means that food is not properly digested. This causes a lot of intestinal gas and bloating which in turn puts pressure on the stomach and contributes to acid reflux. It can also cause acid indigestion.

Try taking **Proactazyme** at the beginning of a meal or Food Enzymes at the end of a meal. Proactazyme contains plant enzymes which are present in many raw or naturally fermented foods. **Food Enzymes** contains HCl, pepsin, bile salts and pancreatic enzymes that supplement the body's own secretions. Both of these products can improve digestive function and result in fewer "acid" problems.

Reduce Gas and Bloating

A major contributing factor to acid reflux is a build-up of gas pressure in the intestinal tract. Frequent belching, bloating, sensations of pressure in the abdomen and excessive "wind" in the bowels are all signs that the pressure of intestinal gas may be contributing to your acid reflux problem. Fortunately, there are many herbal remedies that can be used to improve digestion, increase downward motility of the digestive tract and reduce intestinal gas. Many of these remedies also relieve acid indigestion and heartburn.

Digestive Bitters is a blend that stimulates appetite, improves digestion and eases pains of acid indigestion without interfering with the action of stomach acid. Bitter herbs help to keep food and acid moving downward in the body. Taken 15-20 minutes before a



The Hiatal or Hiatus Hernia

The esophagus passes through the diaphragm muscle (which separates the chest cavity from the abdominal cavity) through an opening called the hiatus. Sometimes there is enough pressure in the abdomen that a portion of the stomach will be pushed upward into this opening. This results in a hiatal hernia. If you have to lift your chest when you take a deep breath, you probably have, at least, a minor hiatal hernia.

A hiatal hernia will prevent the LES from closing properly, resulting in frequent acid reflux. It can also weaken the digestive system and result in under-secretion of HCl and pepsin, causing a general weakness in the body due to a lack of proper protein digestion and mineral absorption.

A hiatal hernia will also create pressure in the chest, resulting in shallow breathing and a lack of oxygenation in the body. This can also put pressure on the heart and in severe cases cause heart palpitations or irregular heart beat. In some cases it causes a sensation of a lump in the throat (due to a "kinking" of the esophagus) which creates difficulty swallowing. It may even cause stress on the thyroid gland.

Improperly digested food causes irritation in the intestinal tract. This can weaken the valve between the small and large intestines known as the ileocecal valve, so it will not properly close. This causes bacteria from the colon to enter the small intestines, which can cause severe gas and bloating. It is sort of like the sewer backing up into the kitchen in your house. Anyone who has severe problem with intestinal gas and bloating probably has an ileocecal valve problem.

Most people, who are chronically ill, have at least the beginnings of a hiatal hernia and an open ileocecal valve. Since these are primarily mechanical problems, they need to be corrected mechanically. There are many chiropractors and other body specialists who know how to work on these problems, but there are things a person can do for themselves to fix the problem.

If you want more information on how to fix a hiatal hernia and an open ileocecal problem, the person who gave you this newsletter has a handout and additional information.

Additional Help and Information

If you would like more information about alternative ways to deal with heartburn, acid indigestion, acid reflux or GERD, talk to the person who gave you this newsletter. They have additional handouts and resource materials to help you. If you have severe or persistent pains, or you don't respond to natural remedies after a couple of weeks, consult a physician. You may have a more serious condition, such as an ulcer, which needs proper diagnosis and attention. You can also consult some of the following sources for more information:

The Comprehensive Guide to Nature's Sunshine Products by Tree of Light Publishing
Healthy Digestion the Natural Way by D. Lindsey Berkson
Foundations of Health: The Liver and Digestive Herbal by Christopher Hobbs