

## Acid Reflux Medications – Are They Dangerous?

Acid reflux affects tens of millions of people, to one degree or another, worldwide.

The symptoms may include; chest pain, reflux of stomach acid, heartburn, difficulty swallowing, nausea, abdominal pain, labored breathing and sleeplessness.

If left unchecked, serious medical problems can occur. The constant splashing up of stomach acid can burn the tender tissue of the esophagus causing scar tissue to develop. This can thicken the walls of the esophagus making it difficult to swallow. This often leads to a disease called Barrett's Syndrome, which can be a precursor to esophageal cancer.

Treating acid reflux can present a great challenge. There are many choices, including pharmaceutical drugs and natural alternatives.

Most people who suffer from this condition rely on drugs to treat the symptoms. They find that simply popping a pill is much easier than changing their lifestyle and eating habits. Treating symptoms does not cure a disease and may lead to more serious complications later on.

The typical over-the-counter and prescription offerings may include antacids, H2 Blockers and Proton Pump Inhibitors.

Antacids neutralize the acid in the stomach and only present a temporary solution. It is not healthy to take these on a long-term basis, as they introduce aluminum and excessive sodium into the system,

H2 Blockers reduce the amount of hydrochloric acid that the stomach produces. They provide longer lasting relief than antacids, but may cause Diarrhea and constipation. They may also produce side effects associated with the central nervous system, including confusion and dizziness, particularly with the elderly.

Finally, there are the PPI drugs (proton pump inhibitors), which are the most prescribed acid reflux medications. They shut off the proton pumps in the stomach that manufacture hydrochloric acid. These drugs include; Nexium, Prilosec, Protonix and Prevacid.

Digestive fluids are responsible for the proper digestion and

assimilation of the food that we eat. The acid also plays an important role in keeping harmful bacteria in check. Unfortunately, there are no convincing studies that can determine the effect of long-term use of these drugs.

There are certainly many potential negative side effects from these drugs. A few of them include: hypertension, allergic reactions, GI hemorrhaging, tinnitus, anemia, weight gain, anorexia, depression, fungal infection and impotence. Clinical studies have shown that with the prolonged use of these drugs comes a greater risk of hip fractures and pneumonia. There are also negative drug interactions that can result in a greater risk of heart attack.

Orthodox medical practice believes that these drugs represent the only effective treatment for acid reflux. Unfortunately, doctors do not learn about proper nutrition or alternative natural methods of healing in medical school. They are taught to mostly treat the symptoms of disease. They are usually not taught how to cure it. Most modern physicians in the West are nothing more than glorified drug pushers for the pharmaceutical industry.

PPI drugs are the third biggest selling class of pharmaceuticals in the U.S., alone. In 2008, Nexium had retail sales of \$4.8 billion. It is difficult to conceive of how much harm these drugs could possibly be causing worldwide. Only time will tell.

Fortunately, we are not limited to the use of pharmaceuticals in our quest to conquer acid reflux. There are many natural ways to address this condition. They include: herbs, homeopathics, simple household ingredients, exercise, stress reduction and food combinations, to name a few. Drinking more pure water can help many people to eliminate the condition. Even chewing sugarless gum between and after meals can reduce the amount of excess acid in the stomach.

Our bodies were created to function in a miraculous way. If allowed to, all the parts of our anatomy can heal and remain healthy in a natural manner. It is usually our bad habits that cause imbalance in our systems. This leads to disease, but can be corrected.

Hydrochloric acid is supposed to stay in the stomach and function to digest our food and balance the bacteria that naturally reside there. The LES (lower esophageal sphincter) is the valve, which opens to allow food and beverages to descend into the stomach and closes to keep them there. It also restricts digestive juices from coming back

up (reflux).

Hydrochloric acid is very corrosive in nature. It is stronger than the acid in an automobile battery. When the LES becomes lazy and relaxed, that acid and its gases can travel up into the esophagus, which is made of very tender tissue. The stomach has an especially tough protection which resists acid damage, while performing its duty.

The LES malfunctions when we eat the wrong foods in the wrong ways. In these modern times people eat on the run. They eat too quickly and in stressed environments, making acid reflux almost inevitable.

Happily, acid reflux is a condition that can be quite easy to control if one is properly educated and willing to make a few simple changes. This can certainly be accomplished without the use of potentially dangerous drugs.

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Charles Stewart Richey is a self-educated expert on how to cure acid reflux disease by natural means and has written an extensive report entitled, REFLUX GONE FOREVER, Natural Acid Reflux Remedies.

For free recipes, articles and information pertaining to acid reflux please visit: <http://www.refluxgoneforever.com>

Synopsis:

Treating acid reflux can present a great challenge. There are many choices, including pharmaceutical drugs and natural alternatives. Drugs can have myriad negative side effects, while holistic choices may have none. It's a decision each of us must make.

Keywords:

Acid reflux medications, acid reflux alternative treatments, acid reflux natural cure, acid reflux medication, acid reflux medicine, Nexium, Protonix, Prevacid, Prilosec, gerd, heartburn