How to Help Avoid Holiday Heartburn

Jan Johansen November 23, 2013

The time-honored holiday celebration tradition of over-indulgence often comes with the annoying food coma and indigestion. Swallowing gallons of antacids or sucking on chalky lozenges won’t stop the pain for long, or keep it from returning.

(Newswire.net -- November 23, 2013) Portland, OR -- However, a few simple lifestyle changes and natural remedies may prevent burning chest pain, belching, coughing and choking.

Acid reflux is a common problem for many people accustomed to making poor food choices and overeating. Add holiday foods and drink into the mix, and it's a recipe for a potential ulcer. Antacids, proton pump inhibitors and other pharmaceuticals are the common go-to for most people suffering from acid reflux, and the uninformed don't realize that these dangerous medicines are not a cure. They temporarily suppress symptoms, sometimes. As their short-term effects wear off, rebound occurs, making the return of acid reflux and related symptoms even more serious.

There is a danger with suppressing stomach acid over the long term. Stomach acid is needed to activate the enzymes that digest our meals. Without those enzymes (some of us no longer have enough) and the acid to activate them the food sits in your stomach and ferments. Then it moves to the colon, but is too large to distribute the nutrients from to food into the body. It continues through the digestive tract building up the bad bacteria and causing damage as it goes. The results start with simple things like constipation and progress to things like leaky gut and even cancer.

Lesser Known Natural Treatments for Acid Reflux

Certain supplements, herbs and foods provide drug-free solutions for acid reflux and heartburn.

Unrefined, organic honey is very soothing and may reduce burning pains. Honey helps adjust the body's pH, neutralizing stomach acids almost immediately. A spoonful of honey at bedtime will promote an easier, symptom-free sleep.

Grow some fresh basil. Basil is used in Ayurvedic medicine to relieve symptoms of acid reflux. Chewing a fresh leaf or making tea from fresh basil soothes the digestive tract.

Licorice root creates a thin film of protective mucus called mucilage that coats the lining of the esophagus and prevents damage from stomach acids. Licorice root is very soothing and best consumed as tea. Licorice root can raise the blood pressure, so consult a health practitioner before using it in large quantities.

Indian gooseberry heals the digestive tract and protects against stomach acids. The herb is edible in its raw form. Add a sprinkle of salt for taste or prepare as tea. Too much gooseberry can have a laxative effect so use in moderation.

Suck on a slippery elm lozenge to relieve heartburn. Like licorice root, slippery elm coats the lining of the digestive tract, protecting delicate tissues. Additionally, it relieves coughing and throat pain from regurgitated stomach acids.
Use bromelain, an enzyme that aids the breakdown of proteins and provides digestive support. Bromelain encourages faster digestion and increases motility, which prevents foods from remaining in the stomach to putrefy and cause acid reflux.

**Lifestyle Changes**

Fortunately, for those suffering from acid reflux and related conditions, there are a variety of lifestyle changes that may also relieve symptoms.

Avoid over-the-counter antacids, which create a feedback loop in the digestive tract that produces greater amounts of stomach acid and of a chance for putrefaction and resulting pain.

Eat smaller, more frequent meals and chew food thoroughly. Saliva mixes with food, predigests it, and signals the stomach to prepare for additional digestive functions.

Loosen clothing around the waist after eating and avoid bending over or lifting heavy objects within an hour of eating.

Raise the head and upper body into an elevated position during sleep to provide relief for breathing problems. Raising the upper body may prevent regurgitation of stomach contents and relieve coughing and choking. Use either an acid reflux pillow wedge or raise the head of the bed by 4 to 6 inches.

By making a few simple dietary and lifestyle changes, most people can reduce the incidence of digestive problems and feel better. If acid reflux symptoms persist or worsen, consult a health care practitioner.

Source: http://www.enrichgifts.com/Holiday-Heartburn-s/531.htm

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