

Nutrition Wellness Center of Nassau County

# **ACID BLOCKERS AND MALNUTRITION - THE MYTH OF HYPERACIDITY © 2005**

*Your prescription for Osteoporosis, Visual Disturbances Heart disease, Dementia,  
Stomach cancer and so much more. WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?*

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**WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?***

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Acid blockers or proton inhibitors range from the mild antacids, which neutralized stomach acid, to the powerful proton pump inhibitors that prevent stomach cells from producing stomach acid. We know them as the little purple pill, Nexium®, Pepcid®, Aciphex®, Protonix®, or as calcium supplements i.e. Tums®.

**What is acid reflux?** Acid reflux is plain old indigestion. Because of the pricey medicines advertised to patients, acid indigestion was given a new name; acid reflux.

**What is the cause of acid reflux?** There are many causes of indigestion. The main one being poor diet, structural problems, obesity, hypochlorhydria [inadequate stomach acid], processed foods, consumption of vegetable oils specifically foods fried in rancid vegetable oils that have been hydrogenated, [cottonseed, soybean, corn, Crisco and other vegetable shortenings] consumption of sugar, excess alcohol intake, smoking loss of digestive enzymes, inadequate chewing, and large meals.

**How do these factors cause the “hyper acidity”?** Let's say we just consumed a huge processed meal such as French fries, extra large soda and 2 hot dogs on white buns. The arrival of this large bolus in the stomach contains foreign chemicals and preservatives that the stomach does not recognize. Let's add to that, insufficient chewing [digestion of foods starts in the mouth by proper chewing and salivary enzymes] and insufficient enzymes [which anyone eating the Standard American Diet has] will cause this mass to lay in the stomach-giving rise to fermentation and bacterial action. Fermentation expands and gives rise to gas and distension. As these gases rise, they are trapped in the esophagus causing distension and mimicking chest pain. This pull and tension of the overloaded stomach insults the gastro esophageal valve to the point where it is pulled open. This overstretched valve allows stomach

acid and its contents along with the gases up into the esophagus. The esophagus, unlike the stomach does not contain acid secreting cells, and thus it is very sensitive to this acid. This action causes a burning sensation in the esophagus, which can mimic signs of a heart attack.

### **Physiology of the stomach**

The stomach is a vat of acid. Specialized parietal cells secrete this acid. This acid is required to breakdown proteins [meat, fowl, fish, eggs, cheese, nuts and legumes] into its smallest units of amino acids. When acid production is neutralized or cellular function inhibited, food cannot be digested. Instead it will remain in the stomach, rotting, fermenting and putrefying by bacterial action. Thus, undigested carbohydrates ferment, undigested fats rancidify and undigested proteins putrefy. All this gives rise to gas, bloating, and indigestion and ultimately malnutrition.

### **Consequences and side effects associated with use of acid blockers**

Long term health complications related to acid blockers are many and very severe. They include nutrient deficiencies, increased risk of stomach cancer, low immune function, poor digestion of proteins, osteoporosis, heart disease, depression, pernicious anemia, poor eye sight, paralysis, severe neurological problems, bacterial pneumonias [as cited in the Journal of the American Medical Association] and dementia to name a few. We will discuss each one in detail, including how to manage this condition by non-toxic methods.

Let's start with **stomach cancer**. Your stomach is your second line of defense with regards to the pathogens ingested by food and water consumption. [The mouth and tonsils are the first line of defense]. Bacteria and viruses in our food

and water are generally destroyed by stomach acid. Once this defense is down, the foreign invaders travel to the small and large intestines where 2/3 of the immune system is located and create other problems such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome, arthritis, Colitis etc. A particular pathogen called *Helicobacter Pylori* is considered the main cause of stomach ulcers and can potentially lead to cancer. Yet many studies show that most people harbor these bacteria, but it only causes problems in certain individuals. *H. Pylori* survives in a state of hypochlorohydrin that is inadequate stomach acid. Once it implants itself in the stomach it is generally treated with antibiotics.

### **Low Immunity**

Immune cells are made of immunoglobulins, which are made up of protein from the food we eat. When protein digestion fails, there is inadequate protein to produce a strong immune system. A poor immune response can lead to any health problem from a simple cold to cancer and anything in between.

### **Osteoporosis**

Calcium plays a major role in bone remodeling and is dependent on the presence of stomach acid for absorption. No stomach acid means no calcium absorption. So the idea of taking Tums® for calcium supplementation [which is recommended to all pregnant women by their doctors] is absurd and a great marketing ploy. Tums is nothing but calcium carbonate [lime stone/dirt], a chalk, which neutralizes stomach acid. If the acid is neutralized, how is the calcium absorbed? Bone matrix is much more than calcium, rather, it is a matrix of many nutrients that include: magnesium, phosphorous, boron, manganese, vitamin D3, vitamin K, vitamin B6 and folic acid for cell division to name a few. Taking just calcium without the other co-factors causes calcium to end up in soft tissues such as arteries, tendons, joints and teeth. **A side note:** lack of gallbladder leads to osteoporosis, weight gain, fat malabsorption, and immune disorders. Without bile, the body cannot break down fat; it cannot absorb fat-soluble vitamins such as vitamins A, D, E, K, and all fat-soluble co-factors such as Co Enzyme Q10, Lutein or any of the other carotenoids. Vitamin D deficiency is a major cause of

osteoporosis and as well, deficiencies have been linked to various cancers.

### **Arthritis**

Poor protein absorption causes the body to steal protein from joint surfaces, with the end results being arthritis. Glycoaminoglycans found in cartilage are composed of proteins. Thus, no protein digestion or absorption, no Glycoaminoglycans=arthritis.

### **Pernicious Anemia**

This is a very prevalent condition in the elderly. Methylcobalamin is the active form of B12 and is the key nutrient to treat dementia. B12 absorption is dependent on intrinsic factor. What is intrinsic factor? Intrinsic factor is a protein made by the parietal cells in the stomach. These are the same cells that secrete stomach acid. These are the same cells that are destroyed by these potent acid blockers medications. B12 and several other vitamins are protein dependent and protein bound. In other words, once this nutrient is ingested, it does not travel by itself in the body, but it is escorted by protein. So if you don't digest protein because it is putrefying in your gut because you are blocking stomach acid, how can B12 absorption take place? B12 deficiency is a very serious problem because it can mimic dementia. B12 deficiencies also cause irreversible paralysis and neurological disorders. A good way to make sure you get optimal amounts of B12 is to supplement daily with at least 1-5 mgs [NOT micrograms] of sub lingual B12 in the form of Methylcobalamin. Many of the elderly are being treated for dementia and depression with potent and dangerous anti-depressants, when in reality they are lacking a simple inexpensive vitamin. An important point to remember is that B12 is only found in animal products. There is no such thing as B12 from plant foods – that is a myth. B12 in plant foods are known as B12 analogs, which only increase the need for more B12. Don't be fooled by food labels.

### **Heart Disease**

By now most of us are familiar with the term homocysteine. Dr. Kilmer Mc Cully from Harvard first identified this marker in 1969. Unfortunately, Dr. McCully, a pathologist, got kicked out of Harvard for his theory that

homocysteine causes heart disease, and not cholesterol. Dr. McCully lost all his funding and it took him 30 years to get his name back. Just goes to show how politically motivated science is, and how in the interim people suffer from improper diagnosis and dangerous treatments. So what is homocysteine? It is a byproduct of the amino acid methionine. Problems occur when there is insufficient methylation to convert this byproduct into a non-toxic compound. What nutrients does this reaction require? It is very simple: ample amounts of B6, B12 and Folic acid in its three forms. In fact the prescription version of folic acid is useless as it contains only one form. So do not rely on your prescription to decrease your homocysteine levels. Once again, pharmaceutical industry got it wrong.

Let's get back to digestion. Folic acid, like B12 is also protein bound and requires protein transport. So in a stomach where no acid exists, folic acid suffers the same fate as B12. Folic acid deficiencies cause neural tube defects [It took the FDA 30 years to admit this fact and to finally recommend supplements for women of child-bearing age, at the expense of thousands of babies born with birth defects and spinal deformities, not to mention their immeasurable suffering and the suffering of the parents], heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer due to elevated homocysteine levels. Insist on getting your homocysteine levels checked which should be about 7. Some labs have higher values that are considered normal.

### **Poor Eye Sight**

As stated before, lack of stomach acid inhibits absorption of protein. The eyes rely heavily on protein for proper function. Thus one of the first organs to respond to lack of protein, are the eyes. Therefore, acid blockers are directly related to poor eye sight.

### **Acid Rebound**

Taking these acid blockers on a regular basis eventually leads to rebound where the person will make excess acid once the medication is discontinued.

### **Side Effects of these drugs**

Due to their cholinergic effects, some of these medications interfere with nerve function. Side effects of interfering with nerve function can lead to EKG abnormalities, potentially fatal ventricular tachycardia and ventricular fibrillation, nausea, constipation, anxiety, joint pain, hypertension, blood clots, impotence, headache and abdominal pain to name a few.

### **What Are The Non-Toxic Therapies To Managing This Condition?**

We obviously need to start with a clean whole foods diet, free of processed foods and rancid fats. Eating fast and inadequate chewing must be addressed. If you are overweight, a weight reduction program will be of great help in this condition. To improve digestion, I always recommend digestive enzymes for anyone consuming the typical standard diet. Vital enzymes are only found in raw or fermented foods. The average person rarely consumes fermented foods such as non pasteurized sauerkraut, beet kvass, or other cultured vegetables that enhance digestion and absorption of nutrients. So every time we eat, we use up precious enzymes to digest food. That is why constant eating/grazing and chewing gum are a waste of precious enzymes. Enzymes, specifically, pancreatic enzymes, have thousands of functions including searching and destroying cancer cells. Therefore, eating excessively, eating sugar and refined carbohydrates we are constantly stressing our pancreas to secrete enzymes.

If there is an active ulcer, the medication must be continued until endoscopy shows a healing. Along with the medication, I recommend Gastrex®, from Standard Process, taken 10 minutes before meals. Gastrex® relieves gastritis and promotes healing of the gastrointestinal tract, especially the stomach and the first part of the intestines, the duodenum. This product quickly relieves an over acid stomach. Great for gastritis, heartburn, Chron's, Irritable Bowel and stomach ulcers.

Okra Pepsin® from Standard Process is used in conjunction to heal any ulceration. This product also assists in improving digestion and assimilation of nutrients by removing mucous buildup from the intestinal walls.

Multizyme® from Standard Process are enzymes without the hydrochloric acid containing pancreatin, fig, almond and pineapple. They assist in protein digestion and can be used during treatment of ulcers. Multizyme® can also be taken in between meals to alleviate musculo skeletal pain.

Zypan® from Standard Process is a digestive enzyme containing hydrochloric acid, which should be used upon resolution of ulcer. Remember, acid reflux is more often than not caused by achlorohydria, that is low or lack of stomach acid. So supplementing with Zypan® will promote digestion, absorption and assimilation of foods, which will result in better health, and prevention of preventable diseases.

For individuals who eat large amount of protein, they would benefit from using Betaine HCL® 1-3 tablets per meal. In my practice, I have had great success using this product for many types of gastro-intestinal problems, including food allergies and sensitivities.

Cholacol® from Standard Process is a bile acid product. Bile is made in the liver and stored in the gallbladder. Bile is essential for absorption of fat soluble nutrients, and metabolism of fats. In addition, bile acts as a cleanser in the intestines to remove environmental toxins inhaled through the lungs. Bile acids must be supplemented if you have had your gall bladder removed to prevent all the health issues associated with lack of a gall bladder. Recommendations are 1-2 with each meal for the rest of your life.

## **Conclusion**

Health starts in the digestive tract and death starts in the colon. Our basis for eating food is for it to give us energy to support life. The inability to digest our food and assimilate its nutrients is a sure prescription for many diseases.

These western conditions are preventable. According to the National Academy of Science, 95% of all disease is caused by diet, the environment and lifestyle. Only 5% can be attributed to our genes. In essence we cannot blame our parents or grandparents for certain conditions. This is a way of shunning responsibility for our health. Our health is in our hands. Don't wait for the government or your doctor to take care of your health, and don't wait for HMOs to take care of you once you are sick. There is no day but today to take charge of your health and restore your vitality and health so that you may live a productive, healthy and long life.

To your enhanced digestion and optimal health.

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