



What You Should Know About Acid Blockers

"Acid blocking drugs may seem great but the longer you take these drugs, the more potential problems can arise."

If you have problems with acid indigestion chances are you've heard about acid blocking drugs. We've all seen the commercials, fast relief. It may seem great but what long term effects do these drugs have on your digestive system?

In recent years, we've heard news stories about dangerous bacteria on food, Salmonella and E. coli. What seems interesting to me however is that some people eat the tainted food and get violently sick, some get mildly sick and still others never skip a beat? Maybe it's not so much that there is more Salmonella and E. coli in our midst, but could it be related to the fact that people are taking more acid-suppressing medications than ever which leaves them less resistant to the germs?

Remember, as we suppress the amount of HCL in the



stomach, we are also affecting other functions. Here are a few that come to mind: Healthy HCL "turns on" pepsin which is a key player in protein digestion. Healthy HCL activates secretin which "turns on" pancreatic digestive enzymes which help digest vegetables and starches as well as proteins and fats. The correct stomach pH "turns on" cholecystokinin which also activates healthy fat digestion. One of the forgotten roles and certainly one of the main

roles of HCL is to kill the bacteria on our food. I have heard microbiologists say that if we could see all the bacteria on our food, we would think twice about eating it.

Healthy HCL function kills many of the bacteria that cause GI distress. Jonathon Wright, MD has been a major proponent of HCL therapy for years. He has his patients swallow a little radio transmitter device called a Heidelberg capsule to measure

HCL levels. He finds a high percentage of his patients do not have too much HCL but are actually deficient in HCL.

In his book, "Why Stomach Acid is Good for You," he discusses how harmful bacteria are destroyed by healthy HCL levels. He shares a study in India where a cholera epidemic found some villagers very sick and yet other villagers did not contract the disease. Public health officials found that the villagers who did not get sick had healthy levels of HCL.

The "DIRTY LITTLE SECRET" about these acid suppressing drugs is that "the manufacturers of acid blockers originally only suggested 16 weeks of therapy while allowing the tissues to cool down and repair." The drugs were never intended to be lifelong therapies. However money talks for most people; if they can take a pill and be pain free, why not! So a whole new over the counter market has evolved. Who's thinking about tomorrow when we can have relief today?

Another interesting note: Stomach cancer is on the rise and the bacteria H-pylori has been associated with it. Could it be that the drugs we are taking to give temporary relief could be changing the pH of the stomach and actually causing all kinds of serious side effects? A 2006 study from the University of Pennsylvania demonstrates a serious side effect of acid suppressing drugs, a 44% increased risk of hip fractures for people taking a class of acid sup-

pressors called Proton Pump Inhibitors longer than one year. This is probably due to the fact that insufficient stomach acid limits the way nutrients are absorbed, particularly calcium and other minerals essential for bone growth, like zinc and copper.

There have been other studies that document more subtle nutritional deficiencies caused by acid-suppressors. Acid blockers may adversely affect bone remodeling or bone metabolism. This can be a problem because throughout our lives, not only while growing, our bones completely replace themselves, cell by cell, every 7-10 years.

Here's the point. Your body doesn't have a deficiency in acid suppressing drugs. But the symptoms you have are telling you there's a deficiency somewhere. The drug companies will encourage you to eat whatever you want and keep buying their overpriced products. Chances are that you have a HCL deficiency that is accompanied with one or more other issues that can be helped by using natural therapies.

Make an appointment with your Wellness clinician and let them help you find a natural way to deal with digestion issues. The longer you take acid blocking drugs, the more potential problems can arise.

Life and death begins in the gut. With a Wellness approach, you can choose life.

