

Acid Reflux-GERD Diet

Acid reflux occurs when stomach contents reflux, or flow back, into the esophagus and mouth.

This action is common for a majority of people but can become a problem when it occurs consistently. Those who suffer from consistent acid reflux, along with heart burn, difficulty swallowing (dysphagia), and chest pain, are typically diagnosed with gastroesophageal reflux disease, or GERD. Diet and lifestyle modifications can help to relieve GERD symptoms. Raising the end of the bed six to eight inches can help to reduce the chance of heart burn during the night by gravity preventing stomach acid from refluxing into the esophagus. Eating your last meal three, or more hours, before bedtime can also prevent reflux from occurring during the night.

Eating frequent and small meals throughout the day can help to prevent the stomach from becoming too distended, which can lead to acid reflux. When eating, it is important to sit down and eat at a calm and relaxed pace. This allows for food to be properly swallowed and digested. Chewing gum or using oral lozenges throughout the day can help to increase saliva production, which may help to clear stomach acid that has entered the esophagus. If you do smoke, it is important to quit. Smoking can decrease saliva production, allowing stomach acid to reflux and get stuck in the esophagus. Diet changes should include; limiting fat, pepper, peppermint, spearmint, chocolate, and alcohol. The following diet modifications can help to limit GERD symptoms from occurring.

Foods to Enjoy

Grains: any grains prepared without added fat, choose whole grains for at least half grains consumed

Vegetables: any vegetables cooked without added fat, sauté, grill, boil, or steam

Fruits: most fruits prepared without added fat

Proteins: tender, well-cooked lean red meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and soy products

Dairy: skim or low-fat milk, soy milk, non-fat or low-fat yogurt, non-fat or low-fat cheese, low-fat ice cream, and sherbet

Beverages: water, fruit juice made without citrus fruits, and caffeine free herbal teas (except those made with peppermint or spearmint)

Foods to Limit

Grains: fried breads such as donuts, French toast, and pastries

Fruits: citrus fruits such as oranges, grape fruit, lemon, and lime

Vegetables: deep fried vegetables

Protein: fried meats, bacon, sausage, pepperoni, salami, bologna, and hot dogs

Dairy: 2% milk, whole milk, cream, high fat cheeses, high fat yogurt, and chocolate milk

Beverages: caffeinated beverages, decaffeinated beverages, soda, citrus drinks, and alcohol

Sample Meals

Breakfast

- Oatmeal with raisins, 1 cup of low fat milk, caffeine-free herbal tea
- Scrambled eggs, cup of melon, and piece of toast
- Cup of cereal with skim or low fat milk

Lunch

- Chicken salad made with chicken, lettuce, celery and low fat dressing on top of whole grain bread with a banana and carrot sticks
- Turkey sandwich made with lettuce, cucumber and low fat cheddar cheese on a roll
- Chicken noodle soup with crackers

Dinner

- Pasta primavera made with broccoli, zucchini and red onion, a dinner roll, and baked apple dumplings
- Grilled chicken or fish with mixed vegetables and roasted potatoes
- Chicken cheese steak made with low-fat cheese on a hard roll

References

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