



Hiteshi Dhami Shah
Clinical Nutritionist

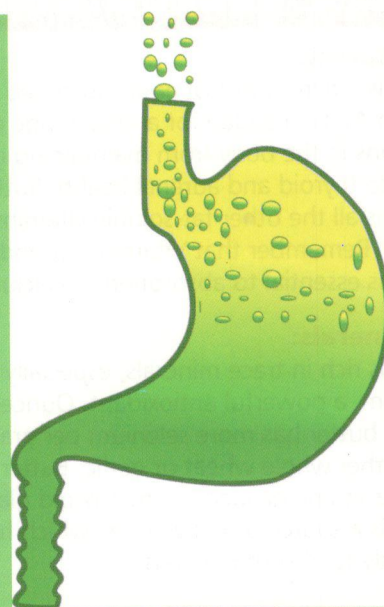
Stomach acidity — one of the most widespread humanity disease

Causes | Natural Remedies

Stomach acidity or hyperacidity conditions are a common problem. Ask the person sitting right beside you in a bus if he had experienced bouts of acidity attacks. Chances are great that he or she would answer you with a big YES. Why is this so?

Our stomach produces acid to digest the food that we eat. This is a regular and natural process. Whenever we eat, cells within the lining of the stomach pump acid to liquefy your sumptuous dinner, from mash potatoes to a slab of steak.

Problem occurs when these cells produce large amount of acid, more than your stomach needs. When this happens, you will suffer from stomach acidity. You would know if you were suffering from stomach acidity if you feel a burning sensation just above the stomach, or right below (the hollow part) your breastbone. This is the most classic sign of acidity. Other people experience acid regurgitation. This happens when you are lying horizontal on your bed. You may have a sour taste in your mouth, which resembles the taste of an orange puree that had gone stale. Acid regurgitation oftentimes results to heartburn, or that pain near the heart area.



Causes of Hyperacidity

Most of the times, acidity is not caused by a serious medical condition. A person experiences attacks of acidity a few times in a year or at times even just once in a year. Sudden onset of acidity is usually triggered by foods that you eat. Fatty and spicy foods are harder to digest than most food; this, in effect, prompts the cells that pump acid to produce more acid than is necessary.

Sudden onset of stomach acidity is also known as acute stomach acidity attack. This can easily be cured by taking over-the-counter (OTC) antacids to relieve the stomach from pain.

However, there are acidity conditions that persist. This is more known as a chronic acidity condition. Stress and underlying medical conditions are usually the cause of chronic stomach acidity.



Other tips

5. Sucking a piece of clove will give relieve from acidity.
6. Consumption of milk and milk products is beneficial. However don't drink milk as treatment for hyperacidity. Instead, have plenty of low fat curds/ buttermilk with meals. Eating yogurts will provide immediate relief from acidity.
7. Taking a mixture of 2 teaspoon of apple cider vinegar and 2 teaspoon of honey in a glass of water before meals will reduce the chances of acidity.
8. Boil cumin seeds and drink it with meals to prevent acidity.
9. Fruits like water melon, banana help reduce acidity.

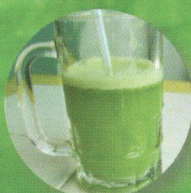
Nutrition Therapy

1. Kokum Sherbet made with kokum and perked with Jeera is excellent in keeping acidity at bay.

2. Vegetable Juices: Juices of vegetables like carrot, cucumber, radish or beetroot helps to balance the acid in the stomach due to their alkaline nature. Individual without high BP can feel free to add a pinch of salt and pepper to enhance the flavour of these juices.

3. Mint: Fresh mint juice taken every day or fresh mint leaves boiled in a cup of water sipped slowly after meals also help to keep stomach acids at bay.

4. Onion: The juice of onions is an excellent remedy for acidity. Have them in salads with your meals or alternatively, you can also try whole wheat flour or Jowar Rotis made with onions as done in the recipe of Jowar Pyaz ki Roti.



Prevention

1. Regular eating habits and a healthy diet can prevent acidity.
2. Have small and frequent meals. Avoid fasting / starvation or keeping long time gaps between 2 meals. Have fruits or non fried light snacks in between meals.
3. Avoid lying down immediately after meals. Avoid very tight clothing.
4. Have plenty of raw food salads, juices, avoid very spicy or oily / greasy food. Use spices only moderately. Make use of herbs or other flavoring agents Eg: basil, garlic, mint, dill leaves.
5. Cut down the consumption of bakery products Eg: breads, biscuits.
6. Have your evening meals at least 2-3 hours before going to bed.
7. Drinking water in early morning controls acidity and water is a good neutralizer for acidity. Drink at 6-8 glasses/day.
8. Drinking coconut water 1 cup 3-4 times a day prevents acidity.
9. Avoid smoking, tea, Caffeine. de-cafeinated beverages.

Avoid pickles and preserved foods, confectionary and mithai, fermented foods like idli, dosa, dhokla, bread and cheese.