



All About Heartburn and Foods that Prevent Acid Reflux - FAQs

A quick guide for heartburn, acid reflux and the diet that can be followed under the advice of your ENT doctor or dietician

What is heartburn?

Heartburn is a burning feeling in the chest caused by stomach acid traveling up towards the throat (acid reflux).

If you experience heartburn repeatedly, it is called gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD).

Let us first see if you have acid reflux:

The main symptoms are:

- Mostly heartburn - a burning sensation in the middle of your chest
- an unpleasant sour taste in your mouth, caused by stomach acid
- bad breath
- a hoarse voice
- bloating and sick feeling
- a cough or hiccups that keep coming back

Note: Few symptoms are often worse after eating, when lying down or even when bending over.

Causes of heartburn and acid reflux

Many people get heartburn from time to time. There is often no obvious reason why.

Acid reflux is caused or made worse by:

- certain food and drink - such as coffee, tomatoes, chocolate and fatty or spicy foods
- being overweight or being obese
- smoking and alcohol
- pregnancy
- stress and anxiety
- some medicines, such as anti-inflammatory painkillers (like ibuprofen)
- a hiatus hernia - when part of your stomach moves up into your chest
- a diet that is high in acidic foods
- eating large meals or lying down immediately after eating

What foods can cause acid reflux?

It is also important to check out the foods that can be harmful to your health during this condition. Here are some foods that you can avoid:

Fried foods:

Fried foods are one of the worst offenders when it comes to acid reflux. This is because they are high in fat, which can delay stomach emptying and lead to increased production of stomach acid. Moreover, fried foods are often loaded with salt, which can further aggravate your symptoms.

alcohol consumption

When you're going out for a night with friends or a date night, you might want to splurge by pairing a beer or a glass of wine (or two) with dinner. Well, think twice before you pop open that second bottle, because alcohol has been shown to slow the rate at which your food snakes through your digestive system. This means your food is not being broken down as rapidly as it should, and it sits in your stomach, which increases your likelihood of enduring an acid reflux episode

Spicy foods

This one is a bit of a no-brainer. When you suffer from reflux, your esophagus already feels like it's on fire, and the last thing you want is to eat something that ignites the flames any further. Rizzo says that spicy foods can trigger acid reflux symptoms in many people for primarily two reasons.

Carbonated beverages

Carbonated beverages, such as soda and seltzer water, can also trigger your symptoms. This is because they are high in carbon dioxide, which can cause bloating and belching. Additionally, carbonated beverages can also irritate the lining of the esophagus, further aggravating your symptoms.

Citrus fruits

Citrus fruits, such as oranges, lemons, and grapefruits, are extremely acidic. This means that they can trigger your symptoms and make them worse. If you enjoy citrus fruits, be sure to eat them in moderation.

Your morning cup of coffee

That morning cup of coffee may just be sending your esophagus into a burning tizzy. If you notice that you experience reflux after your cup of coffee, you may be better off switching to green tea."

Sour Foods

Sour foods can trigger your symptoms. Furthermore, tomatoes are often used in sauces and other dishes, which can make them even more problematic for those with acid reflux. Garlic is a common ingredient in many dishes. However, it can be problematic for those with acid reflux. This is because garlic is high in sulfur, which can increase stomach acid production and lead to heartburn.

What foods can I have if I have an urge to eat sweets?

What sweets you can eat with acid reflux is an important question because you need to be careful about your diet during this condition. You can enjoy the foods given here without triggering your symptoms. **However, be sure to talk to your doctor or dietitian about what sweets are best for you.**

Dark chocolate

Chocolate lovers rejoice! Dark chocolate is actually good for those with acid reflux. This is because dark chocolate has lower fat content than milk chocolate or white chocolate. Additionally, dark chocolate contains flavonoids, which have antioxidant properties.

Fruit

Fresh fruit, such as apples, bananas, and grapes, are great choices for those with acid reflux. These fruits are relatively low in acidic content and have natural sweetness, making them less likely to trigger your symptoms.

Low-fat Custard

You can also have pudding or custard made with low-fat milk as a sweet treat. But don't overindulge and only eat a small portion as overeating might upset your stomach.

Oatmeal with Honey

Oatmeal is another great option for those with acid reflux and you can add honey to add sweetness. This whole grain contains soluble fiber, which can help to absorb stomach acid and minimize symptoms. And oatmeal is a good source of protein, which can help to keep you feeling full and prevent overeating.

Frozen Yogurt

Yogurt is a good choice for those with acid reflux, as it contains probiotics. These beneficial bacteria can help to promote gut health and reduce the symptoms of acid reflux. You can have sweetened or flavored yogurt as a snack.

Ginger Tea

Ginger is a well-known natural remedy for nausea and upset stomach and makes a great tea that can be sweetened with honey. Additionally, ginger can help to reduce inflammation in the digestive tract. This makes it an ideal choice for those with acid reflux

When to seek medical help?

- lifestyle changes and pharmacy medicines are not helping your heartburn
- you have heartburn most days for 3 weeks or more
- you also have other symptoms, like food getting stuck in your throat, frequently being sick, or losing weight for no reason

Your ENT doctor can provide better treatments and help rule out any more serious causes of your symptoms after examining you.

- Dr. Prashanth R Reddy
“E.N.T. health - ENTry for better senses”.

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