

Treatment for GORD

GORD is the result of acid from your stomach burning your oesophagus (the tube from your oral cavity to your stomach) causing pain and inflammation. As well as causing discomfort, long term it can lead to changes in the cells of the oesophagus predisposing you to cancer.

Treatment can involve improving salivary gland function, improving oesophageal acid clearance, speeding gastric emptying, decreasing oesophageal inflammation and promoting oesophageal healing, promoting antioxidant defences, support of the nervous system, eliminating or minimising factors contribute to the problem

What you can do to help yourself 😊

Dietary changes to minimise GORD

Avoid or minimise:

- **Alcohol** (increases acid secretion, reduces Lower Oesophageal Sphincter (LOS) pressure, causes transients LOS relaxations, slows gastric emptying, impairs oesophageal motility)
- **Coffee** (increases acid secretion, reduces LOS pressure)
- **Chocolate** (reduces LOS pressure)
- **Peppermint** (causes transients LOS relaxations)
- Agents capable of triggering Oesophageal Pain: **Tomatoes and citrus juices, soft drinks, spicy foods, alcoholic beverages.**
- **Fatty Foods** (Slow gastric emptying)

Dietary Habits:

- Eating too quickly
 - Put your cutlery down between bites of food – this will **slow your eating** and make you more aware of chewing what is in your mouth.
- Consuming too large meals
 - Reduce the size of your plates and bowls to **prevent ‘portion distortion’**. This helps reduce your portion size.
- Consuming fluids with meals
 - Never drink large amounts of fluid with or straight after meals – **wait about 1 hour** after. If thirsty sip small amounts of warm water.
- Eating close to bedtime
 - **Avoid eating about 3 hours before bedtime.** Chew gum before bed to help clear oesophagus and alkalise the oesophagus.
- **Chew your food well**
 - Put cutlery down between bites, sit and relax before you take your first bit. Eat at the table, not in front of the TV or while reading.
 - If necessary chew gum before meals to activate saliva glands.
- **Other:** To prevent help prevent reflux at night but a brick under the legs of the bed at the end where you put your head. This should help give relief without affecting your sleeping position.

Dietary Changes:

- **Eat a rainbow** – go for colours: red rice, black beans, tomato, capsicum, green leafies, red onion etc
- **Consider gluten intolerance.** GORD has been shown to improve with gluten free diets.
- **Lose excess weight** – discuss with your naturopath.

Prevent Oesophageal Cancer:

- Prevent episodes of GORD
- Promote antioxidants defences
- Zinc: 15-30mg /day (inverse relationship between dietary intake of zinc and incidence of oesophageal cancer)
- Vitamin A: 25mg beta-carotene /day (=250ml carrot juice) for 6 months caused complete disappearance of Barrett's oesophagus in 33% of subjects. Include other beta-carotene rich foods in diet daily: pumpkin, sweet potato, capsicum.

Your Prescription:

Your naturopath will put together a treatment plan and prescription aimed at improving your particular case of GORD.

This may involve: A specific eating plan, nutrients and herbs to decrease inflammation and promote healing, antioxidants, herbs and/or nutrients to support the nervous system.

Treating GORD will involve some commitment on your part to avoid exacerbating factors and develop good eating habits. This may seem difficult at first but over time will naturally become part of your life and way of eating.

You can expect symptom relief in the first week by following the plan and taking the prescribed herbs and supplements. Once symptoms are well under control (about 2 – 4 months) you may be able to reduce the need for your prescribed herbs and nutrients to maintenance levels and eventually none at all. This depends on your dedication to the plan and your individual symptoms

Note: If you are taking prescription medication for GORD please discuss with your doctor before attempting to reduce or stop your medication. Stopping prescription medication for GORD can cause rebound hyperacidity for up to 3 months.