

The Truth about Prescription Drugs like *Prilosec*, *Prevacid* and *Nexium*, and Over-the-Counter Antacids

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If you're one of the 100 million Americans who suffer from Heartburn, Indigestion, Bloating, Diarrhea, Upset stomach, Acid indigestion, Embarrassing gas, Occasional constipation, and a host of other digestive problems ... most likely you've sought relief by taking antacids or other over-the-counter digestion medicines, or received a prescription from your doctor. But new research now shows these approaches to digestion problems may be **wrong... Wrong... WRONG!**

Statistics bear this out. "Digestive disorders" may well be linked to some **90 Million** doctor visits, and **200,000 deaths**, annually. This is pretty dismal results for the **billions of dollars** spent on solutions to this problem. This is the reality for one primary reason, simply put, "MMM" (modern medicine mentality); treat the symptom with drugs and surgery, and ignore the cause. You can avoid this epidemic, but you won't if you subscribe to MMM. This article does not deal directly with the primary causes for digestive disorders, which of course involves the colon, but suffice it to say that, out of the colon comes more human misery and suffering, emotional and mental, as well as physical, than from any other known cause! The astonishing findings of autopsies, colonic irrigations, surgeries and X-rays reveal the colon of most civilized Westerners to be the most abused, **and** abusing organ in the body!

The difference between heartburn and acid reflux is subtle, but clear. **Heartburn** is generally caused by stomach acids that back up into your esophagus. Most folks feel a burning sensation that rises from the stomach into the center of the chest. **Acid reflux** is a regular and frequent regurgitation of stomach acid. This is caused when the muscle located at the top of your stomach called the lower esophageal sphincter (LES) doesn't open and close properly—and allows acid from your stomach to leak into your esophagus. Acid reflux frequently causes sore throats and can even damage tooth enamel. What's more, it can also cause acid to leak into your lungs and trigger wheezing... violent coughing... and even lung problems!

The drugs, ***Prilosec*, *Prevacid* and *Nexium***, are regularly prescribed by physicians because they lower the acid levels in your digestive tract. They are called "proton pump inhibitors," or PPI's. PPI's work because they *temporarily*

ease the symptoms of acid reflux in the short-term by neutralizing the acid in your stomach. These acid-suppressing drugs have become so heavily prescribed, they rank in sales second only to cholesterol-lowering drugs! But while these acid suppressors can relieve painful heartburn, scientists now know they're doing nothing to fix the underlying reflux problem. In fact, this type of drug therapy simply changes the chemical makeup of the gastric juice being refluxed. In other words, instead of being exposed to acid, your esophagus now gets bathed in bile, an alkaline, gastric fluid that can even be more dangerous than acid! A study, printed in the Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery, monitored gastric reflux in patients before and after Prilosec therapy and found that using Prilosec did not change the frequency of reflux episodes—it just altered the chemical makeup of the stomach content from acid to alkaline!

We've all heard of acid reflux—but is anyone telling you about the even more serious *alkaline reflux*? Most doctors focus entirely on treating acid reflux, and never warn patients about the serious consequences of alkaline reflux that can occur when taking PPI's. Just how serious is alkaline reflux? According to Nasser Altorki, Director of the Division of Thoracic Surgery at New York Presbyterian-Weill Cornell Medical Center... "*If you expose the lower esophagus to alkaline secretions, you will get a more **severe injury and destruction** than if you expose it to acid alone.*" And while acid-reducing drugs appear to cure the symptoms of acid reflux, new studies show patients are unaware they are now experiencing bile reflux!

A British study in the *Archives of Surgery* followed 32 patients with Barrett's esophagus who had alleviated their heartburn and reflux symptoms with PPI drugs. Using special monitoring devices, the researchers found that two-thirds of the patients still had bile reflux or abnormal acid reflux, even though the PPI medications were controlling their symptoms. In other words...they didn't feel the heartburn—but they were still having digestive problems! This can eventually lead to more drastic remedies, like surgery.

Another surprising side effect of acid-reducing prescription drugs is that **they create even MORE ACID!** Scientists now know that both prescription and o-t-c drugs taken for occasional indigestion can cause a rebound effect. When you take antacids or other digestion drugs, you neutralize and kill ALL acid in your stomach—including the essential and good hydrochloric acid! It's similar to how antibiotics kill all bacteria—the good and the bad! Because stomach acid is so critical to life, your brain quickly sends a message to your stomach to speed up production of MORE stomach acid. So when the drug wears off, you end up with an imbalance of stomach acid and sometimes even more pain than you had in the first place!

According to *Better Nutrition* magazine, this may be bad for two reasons:

#1: You need acid in your stomach! It's acid that kills unwanted bacteria and stimulates the enzymes to break down the foods you eat, and release vital nutrients into the blood stream...

#2: If you reduce the acidity in the stomach, your body will automatically adjust by producing MORE acid, as mentioned above.

What's more, many antacids contain an abundance of minerals that can cause problems for many folks over 50. For example, some antacids include the following:

Sodium bicarbonate (baking soda)—not recommended if you have high blood pressure or need to limit your sodium (salt) levels...

Calcium carbonate (Rolaids, Tums, Alka-2™, Titalac™) stimulates acid rebound, where your stomach produces more acid and can actually make your symptoms worse. They can also cause constipation, bloating, cramps and kidney stones, and dangerous calcium buildup in joints and muscles, including the heart.

Magnesium (Maalox, Gaviscon, Mylanta, Gelucil) can cause diarrhea. And if used too frequently, can lower blood pressure and cause fainting and heartbeat irregularities. If you suffer from kidney problems, this can lead to excess magnesium in your stool...

Aluminum (Maalox, Gaviscon, Rolaids, Mylanta) can cause constipation and osteoporosis. They should be avoided by women after menopause. Also, if you suffer from kidney problems, this can lead to excess aluminum in the blood and possibly serious memory problems! Most, if not all, Alzheimer's patients have elevated aluminum levels in their brain.

Antacids only mask the underlying problem of heartburn or acid reflux.

Someone has likened it to hearing your smoke detector go off in the middle of the night—and you get up and remove the battery! The irritating beeping sound stops, but the fire is still raging, and you're not addressing it! In fact, long-term use (more than 4 weeks) of antacids has been demonstrated to cause serious health problems. One study of 155 healthy people who regularly used antacids found that **47% suffered erosion of the esophagus**. Frequent antacid use also impairs the stomach's ability to digest protein. And, without the right amount of stomach acidity, "friendly" bacteria that contribute to healthy digestion are quickly destroyed.

There are many things that contribute to digestive disorders, a high sugar diet, excessive alcohol use, birth control pills, NSAID'S (Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), chlorinated tap water, and air pollution, but there are three reasons considered most likely to cause the problem, starting with, would you believe it . . .

Low levels of stomach acids, the opposite of what most people think. As you get older, your body produces less hydrochloric acid. This is the critical stomach acid that quickly devours foods and allows it to pass through your digestive system. Without optimum levels of stomach acid, undigested foods sit in your stomach too long and easily lead to food allergies, occasional constipation, and many other problems, including heartburn!

Enzyme deficiency. Enzymes are the "spark of life" needed for every chemical reaction in your body, including regulating your heart beat, stimulating nerve cells and even creating new brain cells, and enzymes are especially critical for proper digestion. A variety of enzymes are required to properly break down the foods you eat and release the nutrients, protease, amylase, cellulase, lipase, and lactase, just to mention a few more common ones. **Enzymes, along with friendly bacteria (probiotics) are the only two "worker groups" in the body.** They have been compared to both the skilled and unskilled professionals required to construct a home. All the nails, boards, bricks, wiring, roofing and fixtures cannot be utilized without the "workers," and it's true with nutrition in the body. Most people are enzyme deficient because all forms of cooking beyond 119 degrees kills the food enzymes, before eating, plus, as we get older, our body's enzyme production drops dramatically.

The good news is that you don't have to be part of this "digestive disorder" epidemic. An overwhelming majority of the doctor visits, drugs and deaths associated with digestive disorders are unnecessary! For more information on the real solution to most digestive disorders, go to the Nutritional Supplement section of this website and check out the articles about *Digesticol* and *Floracol*. If you're tired of heartburn, belching up stomach acids, damage in your esophagus from acid reflux, and propping up your head at night just so you can sleep, there are natural solutions that work. **PLEASE don't fall for this huge antacid hoax!**

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