

Acid-Stopping Medications

The "purple pill"-type medications and Their Long Term Problems

Discussion

Acid-stopping medication ("the Purple Pill - type Medications) work by interfering with the "proton pump" and stopping the production of hydrochloric acid by the gastric parietal cells in the stomach.

These drugs induce a state of hypochlorhydria in the stomach, which negatively affects the function of other digestive organs. A pH of 2 or 3 (very acid) in the stomach is necessary (and normal) for healthy digestion. The stomach lining is designed to handle its own strong acid production, which has many vital functions outlined below.

Initially this class of drug was strictly controlled and only permitted to be prescribed for a 6 week period for ulcers and acid reflux. Now they are used for month and even years at a time, and are routinely prescribed for any and all GI symptoms. They are given to all age groups including children, infants and even pets.

Acid stopping medications are the number one selling drug in the country and are even available over the counter. Anti-acids can cause similar problems listed below.

Pharmacology over Physiology

It is officially reported that there are few side effects to these drugs, and that the side effects tend to be mild. But what is actually being perpetrated is a form of physiological and biochemical insanity.

The main reason that this is insanity is that over 90% of people with "acid indigestion" and "acid reflux disease" are not making too much stomach acid, but too little stomach acid.

Here are the physiological facts:

We have been told that stress makes our stomachs pump out too much acid, causing heart burn and ulcers. Yet any physiology textbook tells us that when the stress handling system in our body is engaged (sympathetic nervous system) digestion is suppressed. When engaged in handling stress, the body diverts available energy away from regenerative functions like digestion. (Digestion is a parasympathetic function).

When we eat food while in a stress-handling mode, the food sits in the stomach-a nice warm, moist environment-and begins to decay rather than digest. It is the decaying food in the stomach that produces organic acids of putrefaction and fermentation, and these are the acids of acid indigestion. Undigested, decaying food tends to come back up (acid reflux disease) rather than continue down the digestive tract.

Acid-stopping medications and anti-acids can make the resulting symptoms-heartburn and acid reflux-better, but they make the original problem worse. And over time, a host of other problems follow.

What are the Results?

1. Progressive malabsorption and malnutrition

- a. Healthy digestion begins with strong acid production in the stomach.
 - i. Mineral digestion-almost all minerals require strong stomach acid for proper digestion.
 - ii. Protein digestion-protein digestion begins with strong stomach acid.
 - iii. Pancreatic enzyme release-a pH of 2 or 3 (very acid) in the stomach is the "on-switch" signaling the pancreas to produce and release its digestive enzymes.
 - iv. Liver and Gallbladder function-a pH of 2 or 3 in the stomach signals the release of bile from the liver and gallbladder. Healthy bile flow is essential to emulsify and absorb fat soluble vitamins and nutrients. Without healthy bile flow, undigested fat get in the intestines and interfere with mineral and other nutrient absorption.

2. Progressive Toxicity

When food is not digested properly beginning in the stomach, it will putrefy- and ferment-literally rot-as it proceeds through the warm moist environment of the GI tract, resulting in systemic toxicity.

3. Hypochlorhydria

a. a state of ongoing hypochlorhydria is induced.

b. What disease processes are related to hypochlorhydria? The short answer is any and all disease processes, especially degenerative diseases.

c. For a detailed discussion of hypochlorhydria and its many consequences, which were clearly understood in medicine in the earlier part of the 20th century (before anti-acid medication), see the 3 part article "Hypochlorhydria-A Review" by Judy Kitchen in the Townsend Letter for Doctors and Patients, Oct. ,Nov, Dec 2001 on my website.

4. Parasite Infections- loss of aseptic function

a. The low pH of gastric juices is designed to sterilize food. Without the acid pH of the stomach, a person is susceptible to any type of food - or water born parasite.

b. Parasite infections have become far more common than is currently recognized, primarily due to lack of proper testing procedures. A single random stool test (as performed in hospitals) is very unlikely to detect most parasite infections. Specialty testing must be done.

Degeneration of gastric mucosa

Another result of prolonged use of acid-stoppers is degeneration of the gastric mucosa. This is why most users of these medications have even worse stomach burning if they try to stop these drugs.

When correcting digestive problems with natural remedies after the use of acid-stopping medication, the problem usually takes many months to correct. It appears that considerable degeneration of the gastric mucosa takes place. This makes sense, since the constant presence of rotting food on the mucosa has to cause problems. The first part of the natural protocol must therefore address the healing of the gastric lining before any boosting of gastric secretion can take place.

Protocol to Heal Gastric Mucosa Following Acid Stopping Medication

Eat only small, frequent meals with no more than 2 to 3 ounces of protein at one time. (Protein takes the post gastric juices to digest). Do not let the stomach become completely empty. (burning will likely be the results)

After 3 days on the natural protocol below, begin weaning off the acid-stopping medication (with the prescribing Doctor's assistance, of course)

Follow the "Stomach Burning, Ulcer, Acid Reflux, & H Pylori Protocols" page seen on my website.

Before taking hydrochloric acid, such as Zypan or Betaine HCL, do the following test for acid tolerance:

Mix 1-2 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar in 4 oz of water. Drink before a meal on empty stomach.

If this causes any burning, do not use HCL. If this acid challenge does not cause any burning, you can use Betaine HCL or Zypan.

Note: Start with 1 Zypan mid-meal, and double check that it does not cause burning.

If apple cider vinegar causes burning, eating should relieve it immediately.