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The Truth about Antacids

Preserving and Nurturing
Our Digestive System
Part Four

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What a Relief! The Natural Way

Imagine feeling healthy and energetic after you eat. Imagine having no discomfort, gas, bloating or aching. It's natural, it's normal and it's possible.

As we discussed in the last article, the first steps are changing your diet, quitting smoking, eliminating dairy, maintaining the good bacteria and possibly adding digestive enzymes. When your symptoms require additional relief, the Big Four—a great multi-vitamin, an essential fatty acid, and Vitamin C, plus exercise—give you a solid foundation of health and stimulate GI repair.

A Great Multi-Vitamin/Mineral Supplement

Taking a multi-vitamin is more effective and complete than selecting individual vitamins. A good multi-vitamin presents vitamins to the body in a balanced and natural way and replaces nutrition lost to declining food quality. The multi-vitamin also helps all aspects of physiology and metabolism and ensures no individual nutritional deficiencies.

When you're dealing with gastrointestinal issues, a quality multi-vitamin/mineral supplement:

- Strengthens gut flora.
- Protects and repairs intestinal lining.
- Enhances and modulates an overactive immune system.

- Facilitates the absorption of nutrients.
- Discourages the growth of opportunistic organisms, such as yeast and unfriendly bacteria.

Remember, not all multi-vitamins are equal. A multi-vitamin with the right quality and dosage of vitamins, minerals and trace elements can make a big difference in your healing time, and will be dosed at three to six capsules or tablets per day. If you're taking a multi-vitamin and can not see the difference in your overall health, consider consulting a certified clinical nutritionist or a health professional trained in nutritional medicine. (For more information, see the article, "How to Make Vitamins Work for You," on page 16 of the 2004 *Kansas City Health Resource Directory*, published by *Kansas City Wellness Magazine*.)

Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs)

There are two essential fatty acids—Omega 3 and 6. Highly-processed commercial foods have all but eliminated our natural sources of Omega 3 EFA. Flaxseed is the most convenient and economical source, offering these EFAs in optimal ratios.

Flaxseed oil or partially milled flaxseed are highly recommended. Flaxseed oil is sensitive to oxygen, light and temperature, so look for a brand that is prepared in a nitrogen environment with added antioxidants. Take one tablespoon of the oil or two tablespoons of the seeds in a fruit smoothie or fresh-squeezed juice once or twice a day. EFAs perform many important roles in the body, such as:

- Relieve inflammation in the GI lining.
- Repair cells of the intestinal and stomach walls.
- Improve the healing process and help fight infections.
- Discourage allergic reactions.
- Protect from colon and other cancers.
- Normalize the stool.
- Support brain function, build cells and membranes.

High-Level Antioxidants

We need to supplement the multi-vitamin with both Vitamin C and a high-potency antioxidant formula which complement and complete each other. Vitamin C should be in L-form, fully reduced and fully buffered. These antioxidants:

- Improve utilization and absorption of nutrients
- Enhance the immune system and improve general health
- Reduce stress and protect intestinal lining
- Decrease allergies and calm down an overactive immune system
- Reduce overgrowth of opportunistic bacteria
- Heal ulcers and inhibits ulcer development
- Protect from colon, stomach, esophageal and other cancers
- Decreases inflammation
- Stimulate repair of cells in the GI lining and in the neuron
- Protect the lining of the gut from further oxidative damages

Antioxidants include: Vitamin C, selenium, Vitamin E, Co-Q10, grapeseed extract, alpha-lipoic acid L-taurine, tocotrienol, bilberry, ginkgo biloba, quercetin, schisandra, glycine, glutamic acid, N-acetyl L-cysteine, lutein, lycopene, and zeaxanthin.

Exercise

Incorporating an exercise program reduces stress and depression, improves energy and digestion and boosts the immune system. Start out by adding ten minutes of daily walking. Work up to 45 minutes of exercise a day.

Exercise:

- Increases circulation to the GI tract, oxygenating and repairing the gut
- Improves the functioning of the gut, increasing peristalsis and reducing constipation
- Increases the production of acids and enzymes for digestion
- Improves the absorption of nutrients
- Enhances the immune system

Extra Relief

If you still need extra relief, a favorite product is Antisid™. This chewable wafer, which stimulates the healing of the entire alimentary canal from mouth to rectum, contains wild cherry bark, Cabbage powder, slippery elm, DGL deglycyrrhizinated licorice), marshmallow root and more. You

can chew a wafer four times a day or anytime you experience heartburn or GI distress.

When taken with other recommended dietary changes and supplements, Antisid can help ulcers, gastritis, Crohn's disease, irritable bowel syndrome and ulcerative colitis. Studies have shown the ingredients in Antisid also improve the blood supply to the intestine, improves gut flora and increases the life span of the intestinal cell.

If your problems persist, you may want to work with an alternative health care practitioner to identify pathogens, such as yeast, parasites or unfriendly bacteria. The practitioner can also develop a therapeutic protocol to help eliminate pathogens.

Homeopathy can also be effective, depending on the individual's needs and history.

Inviting Intestinal Health and Fortitude

Since stress is such a big component of GI issues, a holistic approach would not be complete without adding in quiet, relaxation, and meditation.

Consider other therapies and actions, such as:

- Counseling for stress-management and emotional support
- Meditation and yoga
- Osteopathic manipulation and acupuncture

The Happy Gut

Digestive problems are a sign that something is wrong— not a sign of a Prilosec or antacid deficiency. Drugs that interfere with stomach acid deprive people of this important life-giving function.

A natural approach to healthcare can have many benefits, including fewer medications and a healthier gut. And a healthy gut is a great step toward a happier mind, body and spirit. Bon Appétite.

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