

Tips for Managing Heartburn



Things you can do on your own

- Try to eat sitting upright.
- Do not eat anything for 2-3 hours before going to bed.
- Eat a healthy diet, filled with fruits and vegetables.
- Sit up for at least 2 hours after you eat.
- Do not lie flat when you sleep. Try propping yourself up with pillows.
- Avoid fried foods, fatty foods, chocolate, peppermint, and fizzy drinks.
- Avoid foods that have caused you heartburn in the past.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
 - Ask your care team for help if this is hard to do.
- Avoid smoking, chewing tobacco, and vaping.
 - Ask your care team for help if this is hard to do.
- Some medicines (doxycycline, minocycline, Fosamax) cause heartburn.
 - Try taking the medications with food.



With over-the-counter medications

Ask your care team if you can take over-the-counter (OTC) medications. They may help. You can buy them at your local drugstore. Take them as directed on the package.

- Try the following medicines one at a time, and pay attention to which one helps you get relief.
 - Take an antacid, like Mylanta, Maalox, Tums, or Rolaids. These medications help to neutralize the acid in your stomach.
 - Take an H2 blocker like Tagamet, Pepcid, or Zantac 360.
 - Take a proton pump inhibitor like Prilosec, Prevacid, or Nexium. These medications help to block the production of acid in your stomach.
- Generic versions of these medications work just as well as the brand-name versions.



With the help of your care team

Ask your care team if you need prescription medications or a stronger dose of an OTC medication.



When to call your care team for help

- If you continue to have heartburn, even after trying all the above recommendations
- If you have severe belly area pain
- If you have problems eating and/or swallowing
- If you have both heartburn and vomiting
- If you cough up or throw up any blood
- If you have chest pain or shortness of breath



For more information and support, visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org/heartburn or call us at **1-800-227-2345**. We're here when you need us.