

How Your Posture Is Affecting Your Acid Reflux

Although there are many types of antacids and other medications you can take to help relieve symptoms of acid reflux, did you also know that the right posture can have a positive impact on the way you digest food, thus preventing acid reflux from occurring? That's right, the postures you adopt while you ingest food and directly after you eat are important, because they can either make food digestion an easy or difficult process for your body. For instance, sitting in a hunched forward position while you eat, and lying down directly after a meal, places additional stress on the stomach and can promote indigestion or heartburn. Furthermore, wearing anything tight around your waist (belts, tight pants, corset, etc.) while you're eating, places pressure on your stomach. Taut clothing constricts your tummy from expanding and moving freely, which is a natural process during eating and digestion. When you put excess pressure on your stomach, it takes longer for your stomach to digest food. The longer it takes for your stomach to digest food, the higher your chances of developing indigestion and/or acid reflux. Therefore, improving posture during and after meals may help or prevent symptoms of heartburn.

Proper posture that encourages good digestion

Sit down at meals - When you eat, you should be sitting down at a table. You should not eat standing, walking, lying down or while driving.

Sit up – Don't slouch or hunch over the table to eat your food. Sit close to the table and bring your utensil to your mouth, instead of your mouth to your utensil. To ensure proper posture while sitting follow these tips:

- Sit in a chair that provides your back with support (IE. High back, firm cushions, etc.)
- Keep your knees level with your hips and sit as far back in the chair as possible. To keep your knees level, your feet should be flat on the floor

Note: If your lower back bothers you when sitting, put a round cushion or towel between the chair and the small of your back to provide support.

Take your time and eat – Don't rush through your meal. Eating too fast also causes digestion problems. You need to allow your stomach the time to register the food ingested.

Don't lie down – Although you should allow your body to rest after you've eaten, make sure you are sitting or standing. Do not lie down as this slows digestion.

How can I improve my posture?

1. Exercise – performing regular back and abdominal exercises (IE yoga, Pilates, etc) will strengthen muscles and help maintain good posture without causing you discomfort.
2. Firm mattress and sleeping position – Sleep on a mattress that is firm and will provide your back with good support. Either sleep on your back and keep your legs straight or place a pillow under your knees, or if you sleep on your side, keep your legs slightly bent and make sure the top leg is straighter than the bottom leg. Do not sleep on your stomach.
3. Constant conscious awareness – Always be aware of how you are sitting or standing. That way you can correct your posture if your body slips into its familiar bad habits.

Good posture improves your health and your overall appearance. When you stop slouching you'll discover that not only will this aid in digestion, it will also help ease and prevent other problems that may occur that involve the neck, shoulders and back. Straightening and strengthening the muscles in your back does wonders for your wellbeing. Give it a try!

About the Author

Describe digestion, and explain and contrast the functions of the nonruminant. Digestion occurs in different parts of the gastrointestinal.

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