

Watching Your Diet For GERD

Hearthburn can get more severe as you age. If you have two or more episodes of heartburn a week, you could be diagnosed with gastroesophageal reflux disease, or GERD. Changing your diet can go a long way toward managing this condition.

More than 25% of people over age 75 take medication for heartburn, according to the Cleveland Clinic. Conditions that can worsen heartburn as you age include weight gain, side effects of medications and hiatal hernia, according to the clinic.

The National Institutes for Health recommends a slate of diet changes that can help control GERD. They include losing weight, avoid eating within three hours of bedtime, decreasing dietary fat and volume of meals and avoiding dietary irritants.

DIET CHANGES

Paying attention to what you eat is an effective way to manage heartburn. Learn which foods trigger your heartburn episodes and avoid them. Track your food intake for a month by keeping a small notebook or making notes in an app on your phone. Note any heartburn symptoms you experience, and at the end of the month, look for patterns in your records. Some common trigger foods include alcohol, peppermint, onion, citrus juice, coffee, tomatoes and fatty foods.

Making changes to your diet might be challenging, but you will be rewarded with fewer uncomfortable episodes of heartburn, and it will get easier to stick to the changes you've made.

CHANGES IN ROUTINE

Changing when you eat is also important to reduce GERD episodes. Eating large meals can trigger heartburn, so focus on eating smaller meals throughout the day.

Eating too close to bedtime also can trigger GERD, so consider bumping up your dinner schedule.

DRINK MORE WATER

Another change that has been proven to help prevent GERD episodes is drinking more water. This practice, of course, comes with numerous other benefits for your general health, as well as skin and hair.

A 2019 study from Massachusetts General Hospital showed that replacing a few servings per day of either coffee, tea or soda with water may reduce risk for symptoms of GERD. The Mayo Clinic recommends total fluid intake of 125 ounces a day for men and 90 ounces for women, with 20% coming from food.



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