



Do you have a burning feeling in your gut? Not the excitement, I'm about to go on a fun trip kinda feeling though. The burning feeling that comes from digestive issues, specifically acid reflux, heartburn and GERD. If you've been struggling with this, I want to assure you that you can get relief!

Some of us experience heartburn or reflux, but all of us will feel better if we increase our digestive fire. It's digestion that is the determining factor of whether we feel energetic and whether all that expensive, wonderful food ends up doing us any good. An impaired digestion is the root of lots of things and it's pretty simple to improve it with a little work and attention.

To kick-off your healing journey, we'll begin with a little knowledge about the differences between these bad boys. And because I understand how uncomfy and downright painful these suckers can be, we'll also unearth the causes and most importantly, give you some remedies that can help ease your symptoms and soothe your precious system.

Let's talk about some common problems you may experience:

Let's start with **acid reflux**—the backward flow of stomach acid into the esophagus. It's very common and may or may not be serious. Anytime that acid decides to go up instead of down, you're dealing with reflux. The tricky thing is it can present itself in a variety of ways. When you experience acid reflux, it can result in **heartburn**, sore throat, cough, a bitter taste in the back of the throat, **burping** and just feeling really **overly full**.

When acid reflux becomes chronic, it's **typically diagnosed as GERD** (a.k.a. Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease). This is like ongoing acid reflux, meaning it just won't quit. GERD is usually diagnosed when reflux occurs more than twice a week on a regular basis. Folks with GERD often experience asthma, chest pain, dry cough, swallowing difficulties and frequent regurgitation (yuck!). It's a more severe form of acid reflux and usually doesn't respond to over-the-counter antacid or acid-neutralizing meds.

Now **how does heartburn fit in the mix?** It's actually a symptom of acid reflux or GERD. You know that burning and tightening pain you might feel? That's heartburn. It also comes from stomach acid that's making its way back up the esophagus (heading in the wrong direction!). Although the name tends to hint otherwise, heartburn has nothing to do with the heart itself. It's often mistaken for heart attack pain, but there's no relation.

There's two common mistakes everyone seems to make when it comes to helping out with digestion. One is to think that we have to suppress the stomach acid to make it better. The other is that we have too much acid when in fact we don't have enough. The environment of the stomach should be acidic to break down food. But when it's not high enough the sphincter doesn't close sending the existing acid up the esophagus. A blend of some lifestyle changes, some healing foods and some supplements can change this so that you really are harnessing your digestive fire.

Common Triggers

The most common cause of acid reflux comes from foods that increase (or create too much) stomach acid. And it can be much worse when you eat any of these on an empty stomach. Here's a list of foods to avoid if you're dealing with stomach acid problems, but not forever because food isn't really the problem.

- Fried foods
- Spicy foods
- Processed foods (anything with artificial ingredients)
- Buttery foods
- High-fat meat
- Acidic foods, like tomatoes and vinegar
- Citrus fruits, like strawberries, oranges, grapefruit, lemon and lime
- Garlic
- Onions
- Coffee (both regular and decaf)
- Alcohol
- Chocolate

Now some of these foods, like tomatoes, vinegar, citrus fruits, garlic and onions, are incredibly healthy. So once you've remedied the acid-reflux issues and given your system a chance to heal, you may be able to add small servings of them back in without a problem.

Also remember that the gut is sensitive to stress, emotions, medications and foods that we are intolerant of. Once you can work on these, your digestion will improve a great deal.

Ways to Remedy

Luckily, there are quite a few things you can try which will likely help you reduce heartburn and acid reflux issues. There's no one-size-fits-all solution, but there are options and that's always a good thing. Read on!

Find the right sleep position

Keep your head elevated when you're in bed. This is proven to improve pH of stomach acid—meaning it'll be less acidic. And our good friend gravity will help prevent the backward flow of acid. Want another sleep tip? Avoid laying on your right side as this may worsen reflux.

Chew your food

One of the best and easiest ways to improve your digestion is to eat and chew more slowly. Breaking down the food while it's in your mouth when you are adding your own saliva to your food is a very effective way to improve digestion. Don't gulp, rush or force your food down with water. Water is best consumed between meals rather than with meals. And water is better room temperature than ice cold for digestion.

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate

Your gut will do better when you are well hydrated. Aim for half your body weight in ounces per day. That means a 100 lb person should drink 50 ounces of water per day. Add in coconut water and herbal teas as well.

Soak up more nutrition from your food with these supplements:

1. Take a **daily probiotic**. This helps more with the latter part of digestion but it helps to rebalance the gut and decrease bloating and other digestive troubles. My favorites are the Klaire Labs and the Microbiome Labs Megaspore. You can purchase these in my store at a discount [access your store here](#)
2. Take a **digestive enzyme**. Digestive enzymes are produced by the salivary gland and the pancreas but some of us just don't have enough! Also our enzymes decrease as we age so if you are over 40, you could use a little help. These help your body break down the food so you get more out of your food. That's a win-win!
3. Drink **lemon water** or warm water with lemon and ginger. Both of these help the body rid itself of excess bacteria and viruses as well as improve elimination. I call this my morning lemon elixir. I suggest you drink it first thing in the morning but you can have it

any time. You can also try a drop or two of lemon or ginger essential oil in your tea or water during the day.

4. Eat daily **prebiotics**. Your gut bacteria need to be fed. They are alive and need a little meal each day to keep them alive. Prebiotics are naturally starchy foods like apples, onions, asparagus, garlic, leeks, dandelion greens and raw banana. I make some marinated onions by cutting a red onion and coating it with olive oil. Then I add some salt, pepper and oregano. This can sit on the counter for several days. Then add to eggs, a salad or alongside your dinner for a great source of prebiotics.
5. Take some digestive bitters. I find whenever I am tired or feeling a little off my digestion needs some help. You can take a full dropper of digestive bitters dissolved in water or by itself. You can purchase some wonderful bitters here: [digestive bitters](#)
6. Add Glutamine: glutamine is a non essential amino acid that is a building block of protein and a critical part of the immune system. It plays a special role in intestinal health. Multiple studies show it's effectiveness in improving energy as well as recovery from athletic performance, improving body composition and immune function. You can order this in the store as well: [glutamine can be found in favorites here](#)

Here's to your health and this important and relatively easy step in improving energy and the absorption of your food and nutrients.

