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Refluxers Play Smart in 2023

Five New Year's Resolutions That Could Fix Your Acid Reflux and Save Your Life

Have a Happy *and* Smart New Year! To Fix Acid Reflux *and* Get Healthier Overall, Improve Your Diet and Lifestyle — These Resolutions Can Be A Platform For Change ... For Living a Long Life

Happy New Year! May 2023 be a great year for you!

If you have acid reflux, here are the five most important things you can do in 2023: No over-eating, soft drinks, fast food, late night eating, or alcohol ... at least do dry January.

If you could do just those five things, you might cure your reflux without any medication or surgery ... and that kind of healthier eating might prolong your life.

Here are the five most important things that can improve or cure your reflux in 2023

1. No Over-Eating

No over-eating, especially in the evening! When your stomach is too full, it should seem obvious, but the pressure inside the stomach causes backflow, that is, reflux ... basically any time the stomach is over-distended.

The old adage *don't skip breakfast, it's the most important meal of the day* is good advice. Eat a hearty (calorie-wise) breakfast, and make lunch your "big" meal of the day. I strongly recommend that you get most (3/4) of your calories for the day in before 5:00 p.m. Remember, over-eating is always a recipe for reflux.

2. No Late Night Eating or Snacking

Late night eating is the number one, single most important, variable in causing long-term **Silent Reflux** that causes **Snoring and Sleep Apnea**, sinus disease, and breathing problems. Eating too late causes a **Vicious Cycle of Reflux**; the more you reflux, the more you reflux. So when you lie down at night, what's in your stomach is in your esophagus is in your throat. At that point, it can go north into the sinuses or south into the voice box and respiratory tract.

The minimum amount of time almost guaranteed to prevent reflux (between eating and lying down or bedtime) is five hours. That's ideal, but the minimum is three hours ... and that means no snacks either.

3. No Soft Drinks

My book, **Dropping Acid**, was so-titled for good reason. A **Low-Acid Diet** is important for reflux because it is the enzyme, **Pepsin**, which causes tissue damage, inflammation, and swelling. I know it may sound counterintuitive, but pepsin is the bad actor... but here's the key ... it needs acid activation.

Here's the Problem with soft drinks: About 50 years ago the Food and Drug Administration mandated that all bottled and canned items crossing state lines either be pasteurized or acidified to prevent pathogens from growing in them. Unfortunately, no one ever told the soft drink manufacturers not to make their products too acidic; most soft drinks today, especially sodas like Pepsi, Coke, most fruit juices, and energy drinks have the same acidity as stomach acid. Wow! The only thing **You Want to be Drinking** out of a bottle or can is still water, and no seltzer either.

4. No Fast Food

Fast food is the kiss of death because it is so high-fat, and most of the time, bad fat at that. The combination of a double-bacon-cheeseburger with fries and a Coke is the recipe for reflux. Even chicken sandwiches today are high-fat, unless they're simply grilled. If you must stop at a fast food restaurant, get a salad or a grilled sandwich without bacon or cheese. And for salads, don't use much of that high-fat dressing either.

5. No alcohol *or* At Least Do *Dry January*

Alcohol is the **Number One Reflux Trigger**. If you go to bed with a buzz, you were going to reflux all night. Silent nighttime reflux, particularly **Respiratory Reflux (LPR)**, is the most common type of reflux we see today. At the least, **Do Dry January!**

Honorable Mention for Another Bad Thing to Avoid: Quit smoking or vaping, because it causes reflux, and it destroys your teeth and gums. Perhaps, ask your doctor for some medication to help you get off the nicotine.