

# Are You Ready to Discontinue Acid Blocker Medications?

Client Recommendations for Weaning Off Over-the-Counter Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPI)

Recommended Reading: "Why Stomach Acid is Good for You" by Jonathan Wright, M.D.

**PLEASE BE AWARE** the process of weaning off over-the-counter (OTC) acid reflux medication can feel challenging as your body works to recalibrate a suppressed digestive system. You may experience some occasional discomfort during your transition off OTC proton pump inhibitors. The weaning process is recommended only for your comfort; you may actually safely immediately stop the use of OTC PPIs without concern. Each person's comfortable transition time varies, and it may take 4-8 weeks to fully wean off the medication. However, this is a healing and recalibration time for the digestive system's natural process, and you will enjoy enhanced digestion and greater health as a result. If you are consistent in your approach, diligent with your dietary and lifestyle changes, and patient with yourself and the occasional symptoms you may experience, your transition will be smoother and take much less time.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** *If you are currently taking prescription medication to address acid reflux, please consult with your prescribing physician regarding your personal decision to discontinue use prior to doing so.*

## STEP 1 - Weaning-off

- Begin by taking your regular dose of OTC PPI medication **every other day** for 1-2 weeks as your symptom level allows. If symptoms exacerbate beyond a tolerable level, try taking a **½ dose daily** for a few days, then wean back to a reduced dose every other day. Follow dietary guidelines as given, particularly avoiding refined carbohydrates and sugar, alcohol, caffeine, excessive amounts of raw veggies, capsaicin and other hot pepper byproducts, tannins in black teas.
- While weaning, use **stomach healing nutrients daily** as recommended by your Nutritional Therapy Practitioner (for example: Vit. A, cabbage juice/Vit. U, Vit. D, aloe vera, bone broths, chlorophylls, deglycerized licorice, L-glutamine, Jerusalem artichoke, milk thistle, probiotics, slippery elm, marshmallow root). In addition, raw apple cider vinegar (1-2 Tbs. in 4 oz. room temperature water) at the beginning of each meal is recommended to promote gastric enzyme activity.
- On the **OFF days** from taking OTC PPI medication, take a **Hydrochloric Acid/Enzyme supplement (1-3 tablets) with each meal**, as well as the stomach healing nutrients. If

intolerable acid reflux occurs, eat a few more bites of a protein food, or drink a small amount of baking soda in water (1 tsp. baking soda in 4 oz. room temp. water) or plain seltzer water to calm your stomach. Of course this will alkalize your digestive juice which is a bit of a back-step, so only do this when absolutely necessary to temporarily relieve discomfort.

## **STEP 2 - Discontinuing OTC acid reflux medications**

- When you can tolerate occasional symptoms on the OFF days, the next step is to go completely off the OTC acid blocker and begin replenishing your digestive juices via a low dose Hydrochloric Acid supplement, typically inclusive of enzymes as well.
- Use 3-4 tablets of Hydrochloric Acid/Enzyme supplement (as functionally tested by your Nutritional Therapy Practitioner) in the middle of the meal and continue use of recommended stomach healing nutrients as well.
- If reflux symptoms such as burping, belching, or burning sensation still present themselves after a meal, either use 1-2 additional tablets of Hydrochloric Acid/Enzyme Supplement, or use the Raw Apple Cider Vinegar in water solution to promote production of more gastric juices naturally.
- If these symptoms persist, consider you may need a greater amount of supplemental acid and discuss the Hydrochloric Acid Supplement Recommended Dosage Challenge with your Nutritional Therapy Practitioner. You can also experiment with the timing of your supplementation, taking your digestive aids earlier in the meal may prove helpful.

## **STEP 3 - Hydrochloric Acid Supplement Recommended Dosage Challenge**

After one week of low dose hydrochloric acid/enzyme supplementation, employ the use of the Hydrochloric Acid Supplement Recommended Dosage Challenge [see attached handout]. This challenge will help you determine the appropriate dose of hydrochloric acid supplement to be taken with each meal. If higher doses are indicated (more than 5-10 low dose HCl supplements) ask your Nutritional Therapy Practitioner for recommendations for a higher dosage product in capsule form.