

# Diet to Control Heartburn

## What is Heartburn?

Heartburn is caused by a back-up of stomach acid into the esophagus. When stomach acid comes into contact with the walls of the esophagus it often causes a “burning” feeling. Certain foods and lifestyle choices may increase the back-up of stomach acid, making symptoms worse.

## Why Do I need a Diet for Heartburn?

If you have symptoms of heartburn, avoiding certain foods can help decrease the burning that you feel. Making lifestyle changes may also help. If diet and lifestyle changes do not help contact your doctor.

Listed below are foods that may cause discomfort and should be avoided.

- High-fat grain products such as doughnuts, biscuits, croissants, muffins, pies, cakes, cookies, granola and pasta with cream sauce.
- Fried or creamed vegetables, tomatoes, tomato sauce, salsa and onions.
- Citrus fruits and juices such as orange and grapefruit.
- Potato chips, French fries and other deep fried snack foods
- Fried meat, poultry, fish, bacon, eggs, sausages, refried beans and nuts.
- Chocolate milk, whole milk, ice cream, butter, cream soup, cream cheese, and other high-fat cheeses ( greater than 20% milk fat)
- Spices and certain herbs such as peppermint or spearmint, including mint tea.

## What to Do?

- Remain sitting upright during meals and for 45 – 60 minutes after eating.
- Limit or avoid alcoholic beverages
- Limit drinks with caffeine such as coffee, tea and cola drinks.
- Avoid chocolate
- Avoid high fat foods such as, deep fried meats and snack foods.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Raise the head of your bed 6 to 8 inches when sleeping.
- For foods that bother you, try to eat them in small amounts and as part of a meal.
- Avoid eating 2 to 3 hours before bedtime.
- Stop smoking, if you do.
- Avoid clothing that is tight across the stomach.

