

PRASIDA AYURVEDA CLINIC

ACIDITY *The burning problem!*

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In my previous articles I have elaborated on Ayurvedic approach to understanding stress and its management. However the fact remains that ill managed and cumulative stress built up over decades usually starts affecting the mind first and spills over to the body and translates into a tangible disease. Mental stress has a strong say over what happens in the gut! Acidity happens to be the most common condition that affects our digestive efficiency. Acidity is identified in Ayurveda as **Amla Pitta** where un-digested food associated with acidic secretions creates nausea and burning sensation in the chest and discomfort in the abdomen. Apart from the main precursor stress, there are many other factors that augment the condition like –

- Eating before the digestion of previous meal (eating when you are not actually hungry)
- Not chewing the food thoroughly
- Drinking un-boiled milk.
- Consuming too much of broken milk products like paneer, cheese etc
- Taking unformed yogurt / curds
- Excessive oil, salt and spices
- Sleeping in day time or sleeping soon after a meal
- Taking stale foods
- Consuming re-heated foods
- Eating food stuffs containing preservatives
- Eating food stuffs made from Hydrogenated Vegetable Fats (dalda / vanaspati)

One or many of these causative factors start creating digestive disturbances with heaviness in abdomen, acidic burps, headache, discomfort in the chest, flatulence, lethargy, burning sensation in chest and abdomen. People usually have an aggravated version of one or two or many of the mentioned symptoms and vaguely term their disease as 'Gastric'.

Prevention :

- The first and the best way to prevent acidity is to avoid the above mentioned causative factors.
- Regular practice of Yoga (Asana and Pranayama) and manage stress effectively.
- By following **Dinacharya** the daily regimen mentioned in the tenets of Ayurveda
- Taking nutritious foods that are freshly prepared and warm.
- Avoiding indigestion
- Ensure that you have a satisfactory bowel movement daily as soon as you wake up
- Regularising food and sleep habits
- Not to eat any thing until you feel hungry
- Not to suppress natural urges of the body like hunger, thirst, sleep, urination, defecation etc

Do it yourself:

To manage a condition of acidity you need to follow all the preventive aspects mentioned previously and in addition to that -

- Try chewing a few pieces of slightly salted fresh ginger in the beginning of a meal.
- Take at least a couple of glasses of well churned buttermilk seasoned with ginger, black pepper, salt, cumin seeds and fresh coriander along with each meal.
- A few glasses of warm (pre boiled) water sipped regularly would be of great help to ease the condition of acidity.
- Include bitter vegetables like karela and patola in regular dietetics.
- In case of Nausea; take a bowl of roasted laaja (popped rice), this is a quick fix !
- Take one fruit of pomegranate daily, remember to chew and swallow the seeds as well.
- **Drink solids and eat liquids !** Meaning you need to chew the solids so thoroughly that you should be able to gulp it down like a liquid and when it comes to liquids you need to consume it sip by sip and that too slowly, this facilitates good oral digestion.

Herbs that can help:

- Triphala
- Yashtimadhu
- Katuki
- Chiriata (kirata tikta)
- Ginger
- Amalaki
- Haritaki