

Stomach Lining Protection Done Naturally

by NOW Foods

Here's a frightening thought.

A growing percentage of our population is living with frequent or even daily stomach discomfort. Unfortunately, many of these same people become accustomed to these uncomfortable conditions. **As a result, their willingness to accept their situation and do absolutely nothing becomes the norm.** If not confronted during the early stages, however, the results can be disastrous.

Millions of Americans live with agonizing stomach discomfort. It's just that simple. But what most of us fail to realize is that overuse of popular NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen and naproxen sodium often creates more problems than it resolves. Over time, these popular, inexpensive and easily obtained NSAIDs can take a toll on the lining of the human stomach. This results in a gradual erosion that may permit acid and bacteria to penetrate into the most delicate layers of the stomach.

Many believe that stress is a major culprit. And while it's true that stress can aggravate previously ignored stomach lining challenges, it is not the only factor responsible for the compromised integrity of this delicate tissue. Rather, excessive and long-term consumption of NSAIDs in addition to an unhealthy buildup of gastrointestinal bacteria can be far more threatening.

Under episodes of stress, normal immune function becomes less responsive, thus preventing the body from warding off bacteria. One such bacteria of primary concern is *Helicobacter pylori*. By weakening the protective mucous lining of the stomach, *H. pylori* allows acid to penetrate the stomach's mucous membrane and erode the sensitive inner lining. Researchers are still trying to determine how this bacterial infection is contracted, but do know that nearly 20% of people under 40, and almost half of those over 60 carry it. Temporary relief often comes in the form of antacids and antibiotics, but these can disrupt normal digestion and harm essential stomach acids that serve as immune barriers in the support of beneficial bacteria. According to certified nutritionist, Neil E. Levin of NOW, 20% of the U.S. population have ulcers (80% with elevated levels of *H. pylori*).

There are natural factors that help reduce stomach woes. Zinc and carnosine support mucous membrane secretion essential to stomach lining protection, serve as an antioxidant by safeguarding the stomach's mucosal cells, and protect against damage caused by NSAIDs. PepZin GI™ from Lonza, is a patented form of zinc-carnosine that has shown great promise in enhancing normal digestive function. PepZin GI™ is an FDA approved new ingredient, which is a complex of zinc with dipeptide L-carnosine and supported by abundant human and animal data.

Nature's other tummy tamers include mastic gum, which may help curb the effects of *H. pylori*, plus supports the mucosal wall cells. Slippery elm bark soothes mucous membranes and protects cells from harmful stomach acid. Calcium carbonate provides mild antacid effects and is safe and gentle on stomach lining. If you're taking a combination product like Ulcetrol™, note that up to eight weeks is recommended to achieve desired effectiveness. After eight weeks, take as needed.

Caution: Pregnant and lactating women and people using prescription drugs should consult their physicians before taking any dietary supplement.

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