

## Dietary recommendations if suffering from gastro-oesophageal reflux

Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD) is the passage of acidic stomach contents back up into the oesophagus, which is severe enough to cause symptoms such as epigastric pain, inflammation of the oesophagus (oesophagitis) or aspiration into the lungs.

### The following foods and drinks are best to avoid or moderate:

1. **Acidic foods** e.g. Citrus fruits, tomatoes, berries especially cranberries and blueberries, canned and glazed fruits, vinegar in salad dressings etc, fizzy drinks
2. **Foods containing stimulants increase stomach acid production** e.g. caffeine in chocolate, coffee, cola and other energy drinks
3. **Carbonated drinks are acidic and bloat the stomach, increasing the pressure** e.g. cola, lemonade
4. **Fatty foods which slow down emptying from the stomach** e.g. fried foods, pastry, biscuits, chocolate, full fat dairy products such as cheese and fatty meats
5. **Poorly digested foods** e.g. onions, garlic, peppers/ chilli, pulses, apples, pears, mango, honey
6. **Foods which relax the lower oesophageal sphincter** e.g. alcohol, peppermint

### Foods to choose instead:

1. Eat plenty of green and root **vegetables**.
2. Try a wide range of less acidic **fruits** and see which ones are tolerated such as bananas, melon, rhubarb, grapes, raspberries. Avoid eating too much fruit on an empty stomach
3. Choose more **chicken, fish** and have lean meat occasionally
4. Choose **lower fat dairy products** such as yogurt and cheese to maintain a good calcium intake
5. Include more **oats** in your diet such as porridge, rice and quinoa which are all well digested
6. Consider using **ginger** for strong flavouring
7. **Drink** more **water** or **milk** in preference to fruit juices, carbonated drinks, coffee and tea

### Lifestyle changes:

1. **Avoid having large meals** as this can bloat the stomach and increase pressure – have smaller meals and snacks instead
2. **Avoid eating a large meal too close to bedtime** – ideally aim for 3 hours after a main meal before lying down, as this position increases reflux.
3. **Avoid exercising on a full stomach**
4. **Avoid drinking too much fluid with a meal** as this can bloat the stomach

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