What Can Go Wrong

- No Stomach Acid: Achlorhydria
- Low Stomach Acid: Hypochlorhydria
- Too Much Stomach Acid: Hyperchlorhydria
  - Peptic Ulcers
  - Gastritis
- Acid in the Wrong Place: GERD – Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease
- H. Pylori Infection → Ulcers
- Stomach Cancer
- Enzyme Insufficiency
- Pancreatitis
- Pancreatic Cancer
Stomach – Symptom Assessment

**Low Stomach Acid**
- Excessive belching, aching, or burning 1-4 hours after eating
- Gas immediately following a meal
- Offensive breath
- Difficult bowel movements
- Sense of fullness during and after meals
- Difficulty digesting fruits and vegetables
- Undigested foods found in stools

**Excess Stomach Acid or Ulcer**
- Stomach pain, burning or aching 1-4 hours after eating
- Feeling hungry an hour or two after eating
- Heartburn when lying down or bending forward
- Temporary relief from antacids, food, milk, and carbonated beverages
- Digestive problems subside with rest and relaxation
- Heartburn due to spicy foods, chocolate, citrus, peppers, alcohol, and caffeine

Stomach Assessment

**Physical Exam**
- Tender spot 1 inch below end of sternum and towards left rib cage,
- Tender spot between 6th and 7th and 7th and 8th ribs on left
- Signs of low protein: poor quality nails, hair, and skin

**Tests**
- HCl challenge
- Heidelberg test
- Low zinc on zinc assay test
- H. pylori test: blood, stool
- Low ferritin
- Protein and globulin +/-
- BUN +/-
- Phosphorus –

HCl Challenge

- Home test to determine need for stomach acid supplementation.
- Start with ONE 500-650 mg capsule (not tablet) containing both hydrochloric acid (HCl) and 150 mg of pepsin.
- Take HCl after a few bites of food; **do not take on an empty stomach or after meals.**
- If you have no discomfort (burning or warm sensation), add one capsule per meal.
- If you experience pain, burning, or a warm sensation, take one of the following:
  - Take 1 teaspoon slippery elm in 8 ounces warm water
  - ¼ cup aloe vera juice
  - ¼ teaspoon baking soda in water
- Next meal, go back to the dose that caused no pain.

**DO NOT** go above the maximal dose of 60 grains for the average man and 60 grains for the average sized woman.
Evaluating Gastroesophageal Reflux (GERD, AKA Heartburn)

**Symptoms**
- Food feels trapped behind breastbone
- Burning pain in the chest: worse with bending, lying down, at night
- Nausea after eating
- Difficulty swallowing
- Hiccups
- Hoarseness or change in voice
- Regurgitation of food
- Sore throat after eating
- Possibly: Cough or wheezing

**Possible Causes**
- Overeating
- Vigorous exercise after eating
- Alcohol
- Caffeine – coffee, chocolate
- Tight garments
- Eating while or right before reclining
- Smoking
- Stress

Causes of Abnormal Stomach Secretions

- Autoimmune diseases
- Chronic unremitting stress – sympathetic nervous system overdrive/dominance
- Nasty bugs
- Devitalized diet and lack of green and bitter foods
- Taking proton pump inhibitor drugs
- H pylori
- Chronic overeating
- Thyroid and adrenal problems
- Genetic issue with acid production (native/Pima, Hispanic, North Eastern European descendants)
- Gastric irritants: alcohol, coffee, cigarettes
- Allergens in your food
- Deficiency of zinc, vitamin B1, folate

Symptoms of Pancreatic Deficiency

- **Gas, bloating, and indigestion ½ hour to several hours after eating**
- **Chronic bloating and gas, 1-2 hours after eating**
- **Chronic constipation, diarrhea, or alternating**
- Frequently see undigested food in the stool
- Frequent bubbles or grease in the toilet bowl
- Stools are chronically very light in color
- Stool contains undigested food, foul smelling
- Stool is mucous-like, greasy, or poorly formed
- Fat soluble vitamin deficiencies (i.e., keep taking vitamin D, but can’t get levels to improve)
- Taking steps to improve yourself but not getting the appropriate response
- Indigestion and fullness last 2-4 hours
- Difficulty losing weight
- Pain, tenderness, soreness on left side under rib cage
- Excessive passage of gas
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Frequent urination
- Decreased thirst and appetite

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Causes of Low Pancreatic Enzymes

- Autoimmune diseases
- Cystic fibrosis
- Alcohol
- Chronic unremitting stress
- Eating too much heavy processed food
- Chronic overeating
- Overeating cooked foods