

Digestion Protocols: Hypochlorhydria



Hypochlorhydria refers to a condition where the production of gastric acid in the stomach is low. It is associated with various other medical problems. A similar condition, achlorhydria, is when the production of gastric acid is absent.

From approximately age 35 and on, most people begin to secrete less stomach acid. By the time people reach their 50's, it is estimated that over 50% of people have low stomach acid.

People with a history of helicobacter pylori infection (the bacteria involved in stomach ulcers) and/or who have used protein pump inhibitor medications long-term are more likely to have hypochlorhydria.

Many of the symptoms of hypochlorhydria resemble excess stomach acid and they are mistakenly put on acid blockers, which makes the problem worse.

Symptoms

- ☐ Upset stomach, diarrhea
- ☐ Constipation
- ☐ Feeling full after a small meal
- ☐ Anemia, iron deficiency
- ☐ B12 deficiency
- ☐ Skin rashes like acne or eczema
- ☐ Weak, brittle, or peeling nails
- ☐ Bloating, gas, and burping after meals
- ☐ Heartburn or reflux
- ☐ Dry, thin hair and skin
- ☐ Tendency towards allergies
- ☐ Candida
- ☐ Chronic fatigue

Evaluation

- ☐ Symptom survey
- ☐ Heidelberg Gastric Analysis Test: <http://www.phcapsule.com>
- ☐ HCl challenge
- ☐ Stool analysis for candida, parasites, and other imbalances
- ☐ IgG food sensitivity testing

Common Causes of Hypochlorhydria

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Bacterial infection (H. pylori) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pernicious anemia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aging | <input type="checkbox"/> Hypothyroidism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adrenal fatigue | <input type="checkbox"/> Autoimmune conditions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic stress | <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic use of drugs, such as stomach acid blockers and steroids |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol consumption | <input type="checkbox"/> Overeating of animal fats and poor quality fats |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food sensitivities | <input type="checkbox"/> Diet low in protein |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gastrointestinal infections | <input type="checkbox"/> Drinking water with meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gastritis | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gastric ulcer | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Lifestyle Habits to Improve Hypochlorhydria

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Chew thoroughly | <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid drinking water with meals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't lie down after eating | <input type="checkbox"/> Decrease the amount of meat protein |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid overeating | <input type="checkbox"/> Increase consumption of raw fruits and vegetables for digestive enzymes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eat small meals | <input type="checkbox"/> Stress reduction techniques such as biofeedback, hypnosis, or counseling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stay hydrated | <input type="checkbox"/> Include acupuncture to help restore digestive fire to help breakdown food |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't drink ice water | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid the use of acid-blocking drugs; ask your doctor first | |



Dietary Habits That Can Improve Hypochlorhydria

- ☐ Chew thoroughly
- ☐ Avoid overeating
- ☐ Take high doses of Vitamin C at meals
- ☐ Include flax, chia, and hemp seeds for their omega-3 fatty acids
- ☐ Eliminate dairy
- ☐ Eliminate gluten
- ☐ Slowly increase your fiber intake
- ☐ Stay hydrated
- ☐ Eat more garlic
- ☐ Increase probiotic foods like sauerkraut, kefir, and cultured vegetables
- ☐ Increase dark, leafy greens
- ☐ Avoid trans and hydrogenated fats
- ☐ Avoid refined sugars and artificial sweeteners
- ☐ Avoid caffeine
- ☐ Avoid nightshades such as tomatoes, eggplant, and potatoes

Herbs and Nutrients to Improve Hypochlorhydria

- ☐ Aloe vera juice
- ☐ Apple cider vinegar
- ☐ Betaine HCl and pepsin capsules
- ☐ Bitter green juice before meals, i.e., dandelion, arugula, and kale
- ☐ Bitter herbs, i.e., gentian and dandelion
- ☐ Clove oil
- ☐ Digestive enzymes
- ☐ Garlic
- ☐ Ginger tea
- ☐ Grapefruit seed extract, herbal anti-microbial
- ☐ L-glutamine
- ☐ Minerals, i.e., calcium, iron, and zinc
- ☐ Oregano oil
- ☐ Papaya
- ☐ Peppermint oil
- ☐ Probiotics
- ☐ Vitamin B complex, especially B3 and B12
- ☐ Vitamin C
- ☐ Wheat grass