



COASTAL GASTROENTEROLOGY

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GERD diet

This diet is used to help reduce discomfort in the esophagus caused by Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD). Symptoms such as heartburn, chest discomfort, and a bitter taste in the mouth often occur due to fluid coming up into the breathing passages. Coughing, hoarseness, or shortness of breath may also occur when there is reflux of stomach contents into the throat.

The esophagus is a tube that connects the throat and the stomach. At the bottom of the esophagus, there is a valve that usually prevents acid from washing up from the stomach. A muscle usually keeps this valve tightly closed.

Some foods cause the muscle at the bottom of the esophagus to relax. Other foods cause the stomach to create more acid. This diet is designed to avoid these foods. Choose your foods according to the Food Guide Pyramid to meet your needs.

Treatment may include medications, but the following guidelines should be followed:

GERD Diet – General Guidelines

- Stop smoking and chewing tobacco.
- Discuss your weight with your doctor. Lose weight if you are overweight.
- Do not overeat. Eat small portions at meals and snacks.
- Avoid tight clothing and tight-fitting belts. Do not lie down or bend over within the first 15-30 minutes after eating.
- Do not chew gum or suck on hard candy. Swallowing air with chewing gum and sucking on hard candy can cause belching and reflux.
- Use bricks or wood blocks to raise the head of your bed 6-8 inches.
- Do not eat/drink: chocolate, tomatoes, tomato sauces, oranges, pineapple, grapefruit, mints, coffee, alcohol, carbonated beverages, and black pepper.
- Eat a low fat diet. Fatty and greasy foods cause your stomach to produce more acid.

GERD-Friendly Diet Recommendations

	Choose these foods / beverages	Do not eat these foods / beverages
Fruits/juices	Most fruits and fruit juices such as apple, grape, cranberry, banana, pears, etc.	Citrus fruits: oranges, grapefruit
Soups	Low-fat and fat-free soups such as clear broth based soups*.	Regular cream soups, other high fat soups*.

Beverages	Decaffeinated tea, herbal tea (not mint), Kool-Aid, soda, water, juices (except orange, grapefruit and pineapple).	Coffee (regular and decaffeinated), alcohol, carbonated beverages.
Sweets and deserts	Fruit ices, gelatin, popsicles, ice milks and frozen low-fat yogurt, low fat cookies and cakes (less than 3 g fat per serving).	Chocolate and high fat deserts.
Vegetables	All steamed, roasted, stir-fried (with little oil) vegetables.	Fried, creamed vegetables.
Milk and dairy products	Skim or 1% milk, lowfat yogurt, or cheeses (<3 g fat per oz).	Whole and 2% milk, whole milk yogurt and cheeses. Chocolate milk and hot chocolate.
Bread, cereals and grain products	Low-fat	Made with whole milk or cream.
Meat, Chicken, Fish, and meat substitutes (nuts, tofu, etc)	Low-fat meats with the fat trimmed before cooking, skinless poultry. Baked, broiled, poached roasted, without added fat.	Sausage, bacon, fried meats and chicken, salami, bologna and other high fat meats (> 3 g per ounce). Chicken skin and meats with visible fat left on.
Oils, butter, margarine	None, or small amounts.	Animal or vegetable fats.

* Fat can be skimmed from the top of soups and stews when they are hot or cold.