

Tapering off Proton Pump Inhibitors

by Dr. Dawn Motyka

We assume you are a chronic user of Prilosec / Prevacid / Aciphex etc. If you have active erosions in the esophagus or stomach ulcers, you should not stop your PPI until these are healed. This advice is intended for GERD sufferers who have severe flares when they try to stop PPIs but are without symptoms if they take them.

First obtain the following:

1. Betaine HCl from a health food store - 500MG
2. Reglan: 5mg #100 -Rx. Optional. Can try without this first and see if needed. Generic name is metaclopramide. Not everyone can use this as it has drug interactions.
3. Zantac: 75mg #60 - OTC
4. DGL - deglycerized licorice 200mg. Regular licorice is not correct and may raise blood pressure at this dose.

Follow these instructions to the letter:

Avoid These:

A- Acids- Vinegar/Citrus Fruits
A- Aspirin (Alka-Seltzer, Motrin, Advil, nuprin, etc.)
A- Alcohol
S- Spices- Chili
C- Caffeine- coffee, tea, colas, chocolates
N - Nicotine (Smoking)
S- Skipped meals
Tight Belts, waistbands, lying down and running right after meals.

Do These:

-Nothing to eat within two hours of bedtime
-Raise head of bed 6" (bricks or 2 X 4 boards)
-Maalox/Mylanta- two tablespoons after meals
-Don't mix solids with liquids

The night of the last PPI dose, Take (2) Zantac 75mg pills at bedtime. You will continue this for at least 2 weeks and possibly long term (safer than PPI). Also begin the DGL at a dose of around 200mg. Pure Encapsulations makes a product called Heartburn Essentials that contains this. I like this product a lot.

At the start of each meal, take 2 Betaine HCL, 200mg of DGL and the Reglan. This can be repeated up to six times a day if you are following the advice to eat small frequent meals.

DO NOT EAT ANYTHING OR DRINK MORE THAN SIPS OF WATER FOR 2 HOURS BEFORE LYING DOWN.

Sometimes it is necessary to taper the PPI dose gradually. Continue the program for at least 2 weeks. When you are symptom free for 2 weeks, stop the Reglan and the DGL. Wait a week and if all is well, try going without the Zantac. Continue the Betaine. If all is well for another week then try going without the Betaine and watch for belching and heartburn to recur.