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## Calming your Stomach – Foods and Other Links to Stomach Pain

If you suffer from an upset stomach or indigestion, you will do anything to get back to feeling normal. Pain, heartburn, bloating, belching and/or nausea are symptoms that fall under the medical term: *functional dyspepsia*.

Once serious causes are ruled out, there are things you can do to manage the symptoms. Here are some recommendations:

### 1. Watch What You Eat

Eat smaller portions more frequently and chew slowly and thoroughly. Eat five or six small meals instead of three large meals and avoid foods that upset your stomach.

Avoid chewing gum, sodas & trigger foods, reduce stress, get plenty of rest and manage your weight.

### 2. Keep a Food Diary

Keeping a food diary can help identify "trigger" foods which aggravate your condition and can also help track which foods create a reaction.

People who suffer from Crohn's Disease can be susceptible to reactions to dairy, gassy, and fatty foods.

Dairy products are a common trigger which can increase diarrhea, abdominal pain and gas. Fatty foods are often not well-digested and can lead to diarrhea as well. Also, watch for "gassy" foods, (cabbage, beans, fruit), spicy foods, alcohol and caffeine.

### 3. Consider Vitamin D and Probiotic Additions to your Regime

Recent studies have indicated that there may be a link to vitamin D in immunity and the inflammatory responses found in patients with Crohns and colitis. Those patients living in southern states had a 52% lower rate of Crohn's and 38% lower rate of colitis! The results suggest the role of sunshine may help reduce the effect of these conditions.

In Scotland, another study has discovered that friendly bacteria in the gastrointestinal tract were 30 times lower in patients with colitis compared to healthy people. The researchers then developed a probiotic to treat the colitis patients and found it significantly reduced the pain and discomfort – to near normal levels. Ongoing research may result in a new mode of therapy.

Often, a few small changes to lifestyle can make a big difference. If you have questions, our pharmacists will be able to recommend some ideas to improve your quality of life, so you get back to your "normal".