

The Tummy Tamer

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Stomach Acid Test

To establish if you have low hydrochloric acid (HCl) (also known as hypochlorydria or low stomach acid) there are some simple tests that you can undertake. Please note that these tests give an indication of stomach acid levels and do not replace medical tests.

Only Try one of the following

The Lemon Test I

- Before eating squeeze the juice from an entire lemon
- Measure a tablespoon of lemon juice and drink
- Record if you have any sensations in the stomach. If not continue and record the number of tablespoons you consume until you do feel a sensation in your stomach. If no sensations are felt after the whole lemon has been consumed resume the test once more.
- If more than one tablespoon is required to produce a sensation, then hypochlorydria (low stomach acid) is suspected.
- Make sure you eat an adequately sized meal to prevent over acidity.

Lemon Test II

- Take one tablespoon of lemon juice when suffering from heartburn.
- If this helps your symptoms, this is an indication your stomach acid is too low.
- If symptoms worsen, this indicates you have too much stomach acid.
- (If you suspect too much stomach acid – ‘heart burn’)

The Bicarbonate Of Soda Test

- To help identify if you have too little stomach acid the following steps may be useful:
- Dissolve a level teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda into a glass of water
- (**Baking soda** and **bicarbonate of soda** are the **same** thing, just with different names. **Baking soda** tends to be the American name, while in the UK and in Australia tend to call it **bicarbonate of soda**. Meanwhile **baking powder**, although also used to make cakes rise, is used slightly differently.
- Sodium bicarbonate is an antacid prescribed to treat gastritis, gastric ulcers and acid indigestion. It is sold in most pharmacies).
- Drink this solution of dissolved bicarbonate of soda on an empty stomach.
- If you have adequate stomach acid, the bicarbonate of soda will be rapidly converted into gas by the action of the stomach acid. This will produce bloating and belching within five to ten minutes. (Just drink more water to dilute and minimise the effects of the bicarbonate of soda).
- If no belching or stomach bloating occurs within 10 minutes of drinking the solution, a low stomach acid level can be suspected.
- In either case do not eat for at least an hour to give the stomach a chance to regain acidity

Adapted from ‘The Natural Health Handbook for Women’, by Marilyn Glenville.



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