

# Health Bulletin



## Help Manage GERD Symptoms By Taking Simple Steps

(NAPSA)—More than 60 million Americans experience heartburn at least once a month, and more than 15 million Americans suffer from symptoms daily. Heartburn may seem like nothing to worry about, but persistent heartburn two or more days per week could be a sign of gastroesophageal reflux disease—or GERD.

GERD occurs when stomach acid repeatedly escapes into the esophagus, creating that painful sensation you know as heartburn. Other symptoms include a sour taste at the back of the throat or belching. Being overweight or obese is a risk factor for GERD symptoms. In fact, the risk of reflux symptoms doubles for patients who are overweight and triples for patients who are obese. However, simple lifestyle changes may help ease GERD symptoms, one of which is exercise.

“Regular exercise aids digestion and helps you trim down, which in turn may lower the risk of GERD symptoms,” says Stephen Brunton, M.D., board-certified physician with the Cabarrus Family Medicine Residency in Charlotte, N.C.

He suggests doing low-impact workouts such as walking briskly, or gentle toning exercises like yoga or Pilates. Be sure to check with your doctor before starting any exercise program.

“Exercise doesn’t have to be exhausting to have benefits. You can build up to at least 30 minutes a day, five or more days a week,” say celebrity trainers Amy Hildreth and



Marty Wolff, former contestants on NBC’s “The Biggest Loser,” who lost a combined weight of 252 pounds.

“If you have persistent heartburn two or more days per week despite using over-the-counter medications or making diet and lifestyle changes, talk to your doctor, as you may have GERD,” says Dr. Brunton. “Your doctor may prescribe a proton-pump inhibitor such as ACIPHEX® (rabeprazole sodium), which reduces the amount of acid that is made by your stomach.”

To learn more, visit [www.take-simplesteps.com](http://www.take-simplesteps.com).

ACIPHEX has a well-established safety profile. The most common side effect possibly related to ACIPHEX is headache. Symptom relief does not rule out other serious stomach conditions. Patients on warfarin (in medicines such as Coumadin®) may need to be monitored more closely by their doctor. To learn more, talk to your doctor and see the full product information for ACIPHEX 20 mg tablets at [www.ACIPHEX.com](http://www.ACIPHEX.com).

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