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## **ANTI-REFLUX MEASURES**

*Lifestyle changes may help reduce the frequency of heartburn. The following measures may help control your systems...*

- 1) **LOSE WEIGHT**—Excess pounds put pressure on your abdomen, pushing up your stomach, resulting in acid that may back up into your esophagus. If your weight is healthy, work to maintain it. If you are overweight or obese, work slowly to lose weight... no more than 1 or 2 pounds (0.5 to 1 kilogram) a week.
- 2) **ELEVATE THE HEAD OF THE BED BY 6 TO 8 INCHES**—If you regularly experience heartburn at night or while trying to sleep, put gravity to work for you. Place wood or cement blocks under the feet of your bed so that the head end is raised by 6 to 8 inches. If it's not possible to elevate your bed, you can insert a wedge between your mattress and box spring to elevate your body from the waist up. Wedges are available at drugstores and medical supply stores. Raising your head with additional pillows is *not* effective.
- 3) **AVOID FOOD THAT MAKE YOUR SYMPTOMS WORSE...**
  - a. Caffeine—coffee, sodas
  - b. Chocolate
  - c. Alcohol
  - d. Peppermint
  - e. Fatty/ fried foods
  - f. Citric fruits—grapefruits, oranges, limes, lemons
  - g. Tomatoes/ tomato sauce
  - h. Spicy foods
- 4) **STOP SMOKING IF YOU SMOKE**—Smoking decrease the lower esophageal sphincter's ability to function properly.
- 5) **DON'T LIE DOWN AFTER A MEAL**—Wait at least three hours after eating before lying down or going to bed.
- 6) **DON'T OVEREAT**—Decrease portion size at mealtimes. It is recommended to eat a bunch of smaller meals each day, rather than 2 or 3 big meals.

- 7) **AVOID TIGHT- FITTING CLOTHING**—Clothes that fit tightly around your waist put pressure on your abdomen and the lower esophageal sphincter.