# Low Stomach Acid Questionnaire

Mark (1) for sometimes or mild; (2) for often or moderate; (3) for very often or severe

**Skip all statements that do not apply to you.**

\_\_\_\_Indigestion or sourness 2 - 3 hours after meals

\_\_\_\_Abdominal bloating, distension

\_\_\_\_Full, heavy feeling after a heavy meat meal

\_\_\_\_Loss of former taste or craving for meat

\_\_\_\_Excessive gas, belching or burping after meals

\_\_\_\_Burning sensation in stomach, heartburn

\_\_\_\_Heavy, tired feeling after eating

\_\_\_\_Constipation

\_\_\_\_Stools poorly formed, pale, greasy, floating

\_\_\_\_Undigested food particles in stools

\_\_\_\_Ridges on fingernails, slow growing nails

Add up the numbers beside each of the statements that applied to you. If your total is **4 or higher**, then you may have inadequate digestion (low stomach acid).

# What does low stomach acid mean?

Having low stomach acid or hydrochloric acid (HCL) means your ability to digest foods is compromised. HCL is also needed to ward off any unwanted microorganisms, such as harmful bacteria (bad bugs).

**What is the stomach’s primary job?**

Think of your stomach as the starter kit for digestion. Most foods need to start with an acid soak before they can be fully broken down, especially protein and minerals. If the protein and minerals are not fully broken down, all sorts of problems arise from muscle cramps and bone loss to autoimmune conditions like Lupus. Your stomach facilitates the movement of food.

**Indigestion – too much or too little stomach acid?**

The most frequent cause of indigestion is too little stomach acid. Without enough stomach acid, food remains in the stomach long enough for fermentation to occur.

**Low stomach acid and inadequate digestion**

Another problem related to low stomach acid is low enzyme output from the pancreas and low bile output from the gall bladder. Adequate levels of stomach acid are required to signal the pancreas and gallbladder to perform. When the levels are insufficient, both of these organs underperform.

There is much wisdom in the saying, “It is not what we eat, but what we *absorb* that counts”.

**The dangerous side of antacids**

Many of the symptoms associated with low stomach acid are similar to those associated with high stomach acid. If the problem is low stomach acid, taking an antacid will exacerbate the condition. The alkalizing antacid will neutralize the contents of your stomach; however, once the food is released into the small intestine it will continue to ferment and produce gas. It still hasn’t been properly broken down or absorbed. Nothing has been done to solve the underlying problem.

Symptoms of inadequate digestion, also negatively affect other systems in the body such as brain function, hormones, and inflammation..

**Constipation.** When stomach acid is low, the colon can hold on to its contents for days, which leads to self-intoxication through the accumulation of excess waste and toxins. This is believed to be the root cause of many serious health conditions.

**Imbalance of Gut Bacteria**

Altered Gut Bacteria → Intestinal Permeability → Metabolic Endotoxemia → Chronic Low Grade Inflammation → Mood disorders, allergies, skin outbreaks and obesity

**Excess Calories** Research demonstrates that altered gut bacteria increases the amount of calories extracted from food. In other words, when you have more bad bacteria then good bacteria, you can theoretically eat a 1,500 calorie meal but extract 1,800 calories from it. This is how you can absorb more calories than you are eating.

**Chronic Low Grade Inflammation** Altered gut bacteria, if it goes on to long, can lead to intestinal permeability (aka leaky gut) where the pathogenic (bad) bacteria give off toxins (metabolic endotoxemia) that triggers chronic low grade inflammation. The body thinks it’s fighting an infection and produces antibodies, which in the end, lowers immune system and overall health.

For help with fixing stomach acid, please contact Michale Hartte.

See contact info below.

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