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Avoiding Heartburn: 10 Tips in Time for Thanksgiving, GERD Awareness Week
Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease symptoms affect a majority of U.S. adults

WASHINGTON (Nov. 8, 2013) – It is not by chance GERD Awareness Week (Nov. 24-30) occurs around Thanksgiving. A common symptom for Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) is heartburn, which can be triggered by overeating. Approximately 60 percent of adults experience some type of GERD every year, and 20 percent of the nation is affected weekly.

“Last year alone we treated almost 20,000 patients in the D.C. area with GERD symptoms like heartburn,” said Arnold Levy, MD, Capital Digestive Care president and CEO. “We developed this list of tips to avoid heartburn because we want everyone to not only enjoy their Thanksgiving meal, but decrease the after-effects that plague many of us.”

10 Tips To Avoid Heartburn This Thanksgiving

1-5 – Eat this, not that:

1. **White meat** – High-fat foods spark acid reflux, so steer clear of dark and fried meat.
2. **Baked potato** – Avoid mashed potatoes, which tend to have heavy cream and butter.
3. **Non-stuffed stuffing** – Cook a batch outside of the turkey to decrease the fat content.
4. **Veggies** – Head for the steamed vegetables instead of the casserole. Also, be careful of the flavoring you use – spicy foods are heartburn’s friend.
5. **Water** – Use your imagination with your beverage because alcohol, acidic juices, caffeinated and carbonated drinks can all trigger heartburn.

6-10 – Do this, not that:

6. **Nibble, don’t gobble** – Eat small portions. Let your food digest – literally – before having seconds.
7. **Hold the ‘mode’** – Enjoy desserts in moderation and if you can, skip the ice cream or whipped cream, which add fat and aggravate heartburn.
8. **Exercise** – Let activity aid the digestive process. Take a walk, not a nap.
9. **Wear loose clothing** – Tight-fitting belts and apparel can squeeze your stomach, which can lead to food making its way back into the esophagus.
10. **Treat** – Use OTC or Rx treatments as directed for temporary relief. If symptoms persist, see a doctor.

Occasional heartburn, also known as acid reflux, is common and often responds well to over-the-counter medications. Reflux is a condition where food or liquid in the stomach flows back into the esophagus. GERD is diagnosed when symptoms occur frequently (two or more times per week). It’s important to see a specialist for GERD treatment. Many people ignore or mask their symptoms with over-the-counter medications, but the underlying condition can persist and develop into something more serious.

“Because GERD can lead to severe conditions like Barrett’s esophagus and even cancer, early detection and treatment is vital,” said Dr. Faisal Bhinder, a Capital Digestive Care gastroenterologist with special training in the treatment of Barrett’s esophagus. “This is why at Capital Digestive Care we offer a comprehensive service that can be customized to the needs of the individual patient, ranging from screening and diagnosis through treatment.”

Listed on the U.S. National Health Observances calendar, GERD Awareness Week was first designated in 1999 by the International Foundation for Functional Gastrointestinal Disorders.



About Capital Digestive Care

Capital Digestive Care is a group of 59 physicians unified across the Washington Metropolitan Area in their desire to advance the delivery of care for patients suffering from all types of digestive health conditions. Capital Digestive Care offers the greatest collective experience in the area along with the most accessible care. The group's physicians practice at 16 office locations and are affiliated with 15 hospitals and 8 outpatient endoscopy centers, where more than 30,000 colonoscopies are performed each year. Many of them are actively involved in research studies, programs and clinical trials through Chevy Chase Clinical Research, the largest research program of its kind in the region. More than 300 studies have been conducted at the facility in all areas of Gastroenterology, especially in IBD, and some areas of Internal Medicine. For more information, please visit www.capitaldigestivecare.com.

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