

LOW STOMACH ACID 2 – BETAIN HCL CHALLENGE TEST

This simple test can help you determine whether you have the appropriate level of hydrochloric acid in your stomach for optimal digestion. You should not complete this test, however, if you have ulcers or are currently taking antacid medications. In the case of the latter, you can try introducing a digestive enzyme supplement containing HCL since it includes a lower dosage of hydrochloric acid.

Step 1 - Patient Preparation

You will need a digestive enzyme that contains HCL. You can order it by calling 613-829-7100 or email us at info@revivelif.ca. Examples include:

1. Digest Plus (Genestra)
2. Betaine HCL & Pepsin (Thorne)
3. UltraZyme (Douglas Labs)
4. Metagest (Metagenics)

Step 2 – Betaine HCL Challenge Test

1. Eat a high protein meal of at least 6 ounces of meat.
2. In the middle of the meal take a digestive enzyme with Betaine HCL (up to 650mg) with pepsin i.e. 1 cap of Betaine HCL & Pepsin (Thorne) (Betaine HCL 500mg/cap) or 3 tabs of Digest Plus (Genestra) (Betaine HCL 162.5mg/tab).
3. Complete your meal and assess how you feel. You should feel a burning or warming sensation in your stomach or upper abdomen. You may also feel slightly “acidic,” or as though you have indigestion. Any reaction of this nature indicates you should stop taking the pills and that your stomach acid is sufficient. The test is now complete and it is recommend repeating it yearly since stomach acid levels tend to decrease with aging as well as stress.
4. If no reaction is felt after taking the BH, repeat the process the following day with 2 pills (up to 1300mg of Betaine HCL) before your largest meal. If you still do not feel anything, continue to increase by one pill per day until you feel any change in your digestive system or you reach the maximum of 14 pills.
5. Once you reach the point at which you feel the warming or burning sensation it’s important to not cease taking the HCL capsules. Be patient and stick with it. This process will ensure you have just the right amount of stomach acid – not too much and not too little –for excellent nutrient absorption, one of the key secrets to looking and feeling your best every day.
6. Note – this burning or warming sensation will quickly pass, usually within an hour. You can also mix up ½ teaspoon of baking soda with a small amount of water to help stop the discomfort.

Step 3 - Results

- 1-2 Betaine HCL Pills = Normal
- 3+ Betaine HCL Pills = Low Stomach Acid

Step 4 - Treatment

Discuss with your Naturopathic Doctor prior to beginning. NSAIDs and Corticosteroids increase the risk of ulcers in the stomach and , together with Betaine HCL, increase the risk of gastritis. Consult with your health care provider prior to doing this test or supplementing with Betaine HCL

- Continue to take one less pill with each meal daily and remain at this level until the warming sensation returns. Continue to decrease in this manner by one pill each time you feel the warming sensation. This weaning down process restores your stomach acid levels.
- You may choose to continue supplementing at each meal (3 times a day) with a digestive enzyme that contains HCL along with enzymes.

If you have any questions: 613-829-7100 or info@revivelif.ca