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THE ACID TASTE OF SUCCESS

Top performance without heartburn



maudrich 

Even though this booklet offers help and additional information to patients who would like to find out more about their symptoms and their illness, it cannot replace a personal consultation with your doctor. Before starting, terminating or changing your therapy, consultation with your doctor is essential.

If we have used terms implying a specific gender, this has been done for stylistic clarity and readability only (unless we have done so in specific case study scenarios). The use of any specific gender is also intended to apply to the opposite gender and there has been no intention to sound gender insensitive or sexist.

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Facultas Verlags- und Buchhandels AG, Vienna, Austria

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Cover by Facultad Verlags- und Buchhandels AG
Cover illustration: Nattakorn Maneerat & StudioBarcelona, iStockphoto.com
Proofreading: Sabine Sauerzapf, Vienna
Typeset by Norbert Novak, media-n.at, Vienna
Printed and bounded by Finidr, Czech Republic
ISBN 978-3-99002-075-3

epub: ISBN 978-3-99030-900-1 (english), ISBN 978-3-99030-893-6 (german)

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Introduction

In recent years it has been clearly demonstrated: psychological stress, unhealthy lifestyle and gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) often occur simultaneously. Somatic (heartburn, acid regurgitation) and psychological symptoms (anger, fear, burnout) share a common underlying cause: lack of adequate self-esteem and lack of time and motivation for a healthy lifestyle culminating in self-neglect.

The acid taste of a manager's life

As a manager you are the motivator, organizer and decision maker of your enterprise. At the same time you have to be aware of current trends and innovations and continuously integrate these into your business. And – you have to balance the needs of your employees, clients and shareholders.

Most importantly, the rapidly growing digital dominance and changing management environment of your profession foster the development of stress. The exposure of the manager to the hardly controllable flood of stimuli and media-based information creates areas of conflict. Within this highly charged competitive environment, the manager has to make appropriate decisions. The expectation is to generate sales volumes greater than 100%. Smart phones, tablets etc. foster business from all directions all around the clock: even at night, on weekends and during holidays. Profit takes its toll on body & soul!

Your private life reduces and, at some point, ceases to exist. And it all happens during a period of your life, when you wish to have a partner, a family or you already have a family you wish to take care of. The constant demand of work leaves no time to think about a healthy lifestyle.

When you find time for sport, it usually happens at irregular intervals and is frequently overdone in order to compensate for the lack of physical activity. At some point, the body starts to show signs of the previously referred to neglect. Troublesome heartburn develops after a meal or during the night; acid regurgitation occurs during exercise; gastric pain, globus (lump) sensation in the throat, wheezing and coughing start to develop. At some point the symptoms start to impair your quality of life and to affect your professional performance.

That is a manager's life and that of employees, too.

Enough theory! Let us look at three typical scenarios in a manager's life leading to GERD symptoms:

MANAGER CASE I: Hoarse voice.

For breakfast you had a cup of coffee, and that's all. At 10 a.m. you are going to give a critical and important presentation to your colleagues and employees describing novel concepts and considerations regarding the future of your enterprise. As a manager you know, that you will have to talk about saving measures. The expectations are great and everybody is excited to hear your talk, all eyes are on you. You start the presentation and suddenly it happens: your voice is hoarse, you start to wheeze and cough, you can't continue to talk. The performance lacks the usual quality and your colleagues are highly irritated. After lunch you get gastric pain, fullness and gas. Most importantly: the symptoms improve or disappear during eating, but one to two hours after the meal they return.



Radiofrequency ablation (RFA) of the Barrett's esophagus: during sedated endoscopy a catheter mounted balloon electrode for the delivery of the radiofrequency is introduced into the lower end of the esophagus (360 RFA).

The 3-stage low-carb diet “Low 3”, to sustain control of reflux

As we have seen, the genetically weak tissue and our unhealthy eating behavior promote the dysfunction and failure of the anti-reflux valve within the lower end of the esophagus (i.e. the lower esophageal sphincter; LES). Concentrated sugar represents the greatest enemy of the anti-reflux valve. Unfortunately, about 95 % of all foods and beverages available in supermarkets and fast-food chains, contain concentrated sugar. Irrespective of its prevalence and the fact that we like it, concentrated sugar distends the stomach, inhibits gastric emptying and thus weakens the anti-reflux valve. As a consequence, reflux and other symptoms occur after a meal containing concentrated sugar.

What is concentrated sugar?

For a better understanding of the following table 2 (p. 27 f.) we indicate, which food products and beverages contain concentrated sugar and explain why it should be avoided in the acute phase of GERD (“traffic light red phase” of the “LOW 3”-diet).

Concentrated sugar

Animal and plant-derived foods contain a balanced mix of sugar and other constituents including proteins, vitamins, trace elements and water.

When sugar is extracted from its natural source and dissected from other constituent nutrients, concentrated, refined sugar forms emerge. Extraction occurs during cooking/steaming of whole foods in hot water, and also when squeezing fruit juice, peeling oranges and apples etc. The exception to the rule: boiling an egg for 10 min. destroys all concentrated sugar. Other foods including germ buds (beans, onions, potatoes) contain concentrated sugar for root formation. Alcoholic beverages also comprise significant amounts of concentrated sugar.

If your body is sugar-sensitive, concentrated sugar may drain energy from your “batteries” during digestion. As a consequence, the consumption of food containing concentrated sugar causes tiredness, fullness and gaseous bloating. The sensitivity to concentrated sugar may be inherited or acquired during life. If disciplined, failure and dysfunction of the anti-reflux valve can be compensated by nutrition alone in 80% of the cases. What would you have to do? You would have to stop consuming food and beverages containing concentrated sugar. For this purpose we developed the so-called “3-stage low-carb diet (Low 3)”.

Table 2: Foods and beverages inducing or preventing GERD

Foods & beverages inducing reflux and GERD symptoms	Foods & beverages preventing reflux and GERD symptoms
<p>Corn products and sweeteners all forms of bread, cookies, cake, desserts, porridge, muesli noodles, dumplings, gnocchi, ravioli, rice, glass noodles, corn, popcorn, nuts, chestnuts, almonds artificial sugar, preservatives, food additives (E-numbers), stevia, sweetener, maple sirup, flavoring substances</p>	<p>Products of animal origin any meat except ham, bacon and sausage packed (sugar) any fresh, frozen or smoked fish and sea food, except packed with sugar! hard-boiled egg (10 min.), but no soft-boiled or fried egg, scrambled egg</p>

One hour before sports, you should eat a portion of a low-carb mix (ham, bacon, cucumber, apple, grilled fish, meat, leaf salad, fennel etc.) and drink 1 liter of water. In the yellow phase you may add side dishes (French fries etc.), but take care not to overeat and overdistend the stomach. Most importantly: if you are going to plan a *long and high powered workout* for the next day, prepare some pasta or meat with potatoes for dinner (at least 2.5 hrs before bed time), then you will have enough energy for the upcoming physical activity (jogging, marathon, bike ride etc.).

TRAP 8: Multi media mix induced stress

Imagine you are at home: the TV is on, at the same time you check your e-mails, twitter and facebook accounts, your smart phone rings, ...

You are continuously bombarded with digital information. This increases the body's stress level, which in turn weakens the anti-reflux valve. As a consequence, you get reflux and GERD symptoms (gastric pain, heart-burn, cough, chest pain).

 **Tip:** Focus yourself on the moment, avoid digital communication devices for at least for 30 min. per day and 2 half days over the weekend. Do not force yourself to continuously check and reply to digital information. There is no must, no rule, no law that you have to do so. Instead of getting lost in the flood of continuously evolving information “trash”, step back and find time for yourself, your friends and family, and forget about your job as a manager. Digital detox of 30 minutes per day and at least 6 hrs per weekend, helps you rebalance yourself. These times should be filled with sports, yoga, meditation, relaxation and recreation. This ultimately will improve esophageal health.

It is well accepted that managers usually follow a stressful life including unhealthy eating habits. This in turn fosters the development of acid reflux, presenting symptoms like heartburn, dysphagia, hoarseness and a dry cough. Although not life threatening, these symptoms often become permanent, leading to deterioration of quality of life and productivity. Due to their busy lifestyle, managers, executives, salespeople and entrepreneurs are particularly vulnerable to gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

For the first time a bilingual guidebook provides essential information, including medical and nutritional aspects, on how to deal with GERD symptoms.

- Anti-heartburn guidebook in German and English
- Compact and informative – essentials about heartburn in just 40 minutes
- Tips and ideas for avoiding reflux traps
- Numerous examples of patients



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