

## **GERD – Patient Instructions**

**Some patients find that some or all of the following suggestions are helpful in reducing or preventing heartburn and other symptoms of GERD. Consult with your doctor to determine which of these measures may be appropriate for you.**

### **1. Bed Blocks**

Elevate the head of your bed 2-6 inches with wood blocks or bricks. Using extra pillows is NOT a good substitute. Use of a foam wedge beneath the upper half of the body is an alternative.

### **2. Avoid Foods if they Cause Symptoms**

Foods that may aggravate the symptoms include: spicy and fatty foods, tomato and citrus juices (such as grapefruit and orange juices), chocolate, mints, coffee, tea, colas, and alcoholic beverages.

### **3. Do Not Lie Down for 2 Hours After Eating**

Allow gravity to work. Also, avoid bending over at the waist to pick up things; instead bend at the knees.

### **4. Stop smoking**

If you cannot stop, decreasing the number of cigarettes you smoke may help.

### **5. Limit coffee**

Limit coffee to 2-3 cups per day. Limiting consumption of other caffeine-containing beverages (tea, soft drinks) may also be helpful.

### **6. Avoid Tight Clothing**

Tight belts, tight pants or girdles can increase the pressure on the abdomen.

### **7. Antacids**

Antacids can be taken at bedtime and 30-60 minutes after each meal or as directed by your physician.

### **8. Eat Smaller Meals**

Don't overfill your stomach.

### **9. Maintain Your Ideal Weight**

Excess weight increases the amount of pressure constantly placed on your stomach. Even small amounts of weight loss may help.