

**PENNY SAVER NEWS**

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### Avoiding the Burn

A burning pain in your chest. That nauseous feeling in your stomach. A bitter taste in your mouth. Sound familiar? If so, you may be among the millions of Americans suffering from Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease, or more simply, GERD. GERD is a more serious form of acid reflux or heartburn, where the contents of the stomach rise back into the esophagus. If this happens more than twice a week, it is considered GERD. People of all ages can develop this disease, and although things like obesity, smoking, and pregnancy can cause it, sometimes GERD can show up without a clear explanation.

So, what's the easiest way to stop these unpleasant GERD symptoms in their tracks? For over 100 million people in the U.S., it's popping a pill such as Nexium, Prilosec, or Prevacid. And while these medicines often work well, they can cause some pretty nasty side effects in the long run. For instance, they could prevent your body from absorbing all the vitamins and nutrients it needs. Worse, they can increase your risk of things like bone fractures and pneumonia. Not exactly what you want, right?

But wait, what if there's a better way to reduce heartburn symptoms without a prescription from your doctor or a slew of unwanted side effects? And what if it would guarantee a healthier you? It turns out, the best way to control those awful GERD

symptoms is often to simply modify your diet. Because for many people, the culprit of their heartburn is probably the foods they're eating.

What foods are likely to cause symptoms of GERD? Perhaps some of the most common culprits are large meals that are high in fat. It takes the body a long time to digest high-fat foods, which means they sit in the stomach longer. If they're just hanging out in the stomach with nothing to do, they're more likely to climb back up and make you feel sick. Plus, if the meal you ate was large, the stomach often can't handle all of that food at once, so the food has nowhere to go but up. On the other hand, meals that are low in fat are digested much more quickly, meaning the food won't have time to rise back up. So if you have GERD, remember that large, high-fat meals will likely make you feel sick, whereas small, frequent meals will leave you feeling much better.

Another source of your GERD symptoms may be certain "trigger foods". Since these are not the same for everyone the best way to find yours is to keep a food diary for a few days. Write down everything you eat and any symptoms you experience after your meals. By doing this, you'll have a visual way to see which specific foods give you heartburn. Then, as difficult as it may be, it is best to cut those foods out of your diet.

What are some common GERD-triggering foods? Chocolate; alcohol; beverages with caffeine such as coffee, soda, and tea; peppermint and spearmint; spicy foods; foods with a lot of seasoning on them; acidic foods such as oranges, orange juice, grapefruits, lemons, tomatoes; raw onions, garlic, and pineapple are all common sources of acid indigestion.

It may sound impossible to give up high-fat foods and your specific trigger foods. But there are tons of modifications out there to turn your old recipes into healthier,

heartburn-free meals. For instance, here's a recipe for chicken that tastes fried, but is actually baked. It's much healthier, tastes delicious, and won't leave you feeling lousy after you eat it. Serve with a big salad and crusty bread. If your family enjoys more spice, and it doesn't fire up your GERD, add some chili powder to the cornmeal. Enjoy!

### Buttermilk Oven-Fried Chicken

3 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts	1 cup buttermilk
¼ cup cornmeal	¼ cup flour
2 tablespoons butter, softened	1 pinch salt

Place chicken breasts in a plastic bag. Add buttermilk and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Mix flour, cornmeal, and salt in a plastic bag. Place one chicken breast into bag containing the flour mixture. Shake to coat chicken. Spray a 9x13 inch baking dish with cooking spray, and place coated chicken breast in dish. Repeat with additional chicken breasts. Drizzle half of the melted butter onto chicken. Bake chicken for 10 minutes. Remove the dish, turn chicken pieces over, and drizzle with remaining butter. Bake an additional 10 minutes, or until cooked thoroughly. Use a meat thermometer to be sure. It has to read 165°F in the middle to be safe! Serves 3.