

## Recipe for Replacing Reflux Reflex

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In Chinese medicine, refluxing, excessive burping, and vomiting are all symptom patterns of the upward movement of chi (energy). While this upward movement of qi is not a healthy state in general, short term refluxing or vomiting can be viewed in a positive light. The upward movement of energy in refluxing and vomiting can provide temporary relief of stomach fullness and discomfort. Vomiting is an actual therapy in the Ayurvedic healing tradition of India. A refluxing action, such as in vomiting, is believed to be able to adjust energy flow through the gastro-intestinal system. You may have experienced this adjusting action yourself after vomiting. Chronic refluxing (sometimes diagnosed as gastro-esophageal reflux disease or **GERD** by physicians and advanced practice nurses) is not a healthy state. Refluxing of acidic stomach contents can cause a burn to the esophagus (the tube from the mouth to the stomach).

People are often enticed by the media to try over-the-counter pills as the first remedy for gastric reflux to quell the burning sensation and relieve a gassy belly. Taking a pill has become a reflex for many Americans. It is a good idea to discuss over-the-counter pills with your health practitioner or pharmacist before using them. There are potential adverse effects to all over-the-counter medications. Try replacing the reflex of immediately going for the pills with self-care and home remedies. The pills are still there if needed.

Since refluxing is often a chronic pattern, you may want to consider some lifestyle remedies. First, if your refluxing is caused by overeating, eat smaller portions more frequently. If you reflux more at night, do not eat food 2-3 hours before bed and prop your head up with a pillow. If you get a little

hungry before bed, try a cup of herbal tea with a little honey in it. If you have been experiencing a burning sensation, it may take a few weeks for the burned tissue in your esophagus to heal so give your lifestyle changes at least 30 days before evaluating a change. One other reason some people are prone to reflux is that the gas that forms from food digestion gets trapped in the stomach (i.e. they do not burp or pass the gas easily). If this is the case, consider trying this adaptation of an old Ayurvedic remedy:

**Lemon Qi Remedy**

Juice of One Lemon

Pinch Salt

2 Pinches Ground Pepper

1 Tablespoon Honey

Stir vigorously in small jar until blended. Swallow one teaspoon of the **Lemon Qi Remedy** followed by a small swish of water. Do not eat or drink for at least 20 minutes. **Lemon Qi Remedy** can be taken after eating to also help expel gas and fullness associated with refluxing of qi. Store in refrigerator for no more than 5 days. Best used fresh.