



What you should do

Use your heartburn medicines safely by:

- Knowing when to take your medicines.
- Contacting your doctor if you notice any unwanted effects.
- Telling your doctor and pharmacist about **ALL** the medicines you are taking including medicines purchased from pharmacies, health food shops or supermarkets.
- Asking your pharmacist or doctor for a Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflet for each of your medicines.
- Asking your doctor and pharmacist to assist you to maintain an accurate list of **ALL** your medicines.

For more help with your medicines ask your doctor for a Home Medicines Review.

Veterans' MATES

www.dva.gov.au/health/veteransmates

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What you need to know about Medicines for Heartburn

Get the best from your medicines





heartburn

What is **heartburn**?

Heartburn is also called **indigestion**. It is a burning sensation or pain in your chest, behind your breastbone.

Symptoms may include:

- a sour taste in your mouth,
- excessive saliva, and
- bloating (often relieved by burping).

Heartburn is caused by stomach contents, including acid, rising up into your oesophagus (food pipe). This is also called reflux.

Heartburn can be worse when you bend forward or lie down.

Speak to your **doctor and pharmacist** about how to get the best from your medicines. Take this brochure with you.



medicines

Medicines to treat heartburn

Speak to your doctor and pharmacist about the best way for you to take these medicines. There are several types of medicines to treat heartburn which include antacids and acid-reducing medicines. You may need to take a medicine regularly or just when you feel the heartburn.

Ask your **doctor**

How long do I need to take the medicine?

What should I do if my heartburn returns or gets worse?

What should I do if I notice

- black sticky stools
- unexplained weight loss
- difficulty or pain on swallowing
- if I vomit blood?



tips

How you can **reduce heartburn**

- Stop smoking.
- Lose weight, if you need to.
- Ask your doctor and pharmacist to review your medicines to make sure they are not causing or making it worse.
- Avoid eating large meals.
- Avoid the foods that make your heartburn worse such as fatty and spicy foods.
- Avoid excessive alcohol, caffeine and chocolate.
- Avoid lying down, bending or straining immediately after meals.
- Raising the head of your bed may lessen night-time heartburn.

