

Stomach Acid Test

Stomach acid plays an essential role in digestion. It breaks down food, assists in the absorption of nutrients and adds an immune barrier. Without adequate stomach acid, uncomfortable digestive symptoms occur and health problems arise.

If you often experience gas, bloating, cramping or reflux after eating it could indicate you have an insufficient levels of stomach acid.

Stomach acid is required to properly digest proteins. If food is not digested properly it can stay in the stomach much longer than it should and ferment. This can lead to unpleasant digestive issues.

Stomach acid is also needed for the efficient absorption of important nutrients such as iron, calcium, and B12. Individuals with low stomach acid can become deficient in these nutrients over time.

There is a simple test you can carry out at home which can help determine if you are not producing enough stomach acid. Whilst the test is not absolute, it can be a useful indicator. This test is called the bicarbonate of soda test.

Bicarbonate of soda test

Do this test when you have an empty stomach, but just before a normal meal:

1. Mix 1 teaspoon of baking soda in a 250 ml glass of water (that's baking soda — sodium bicarbonate, not baking powder).
2. Drink it, noting the time on your watch or a clock.
3. Measure how much time passes before you burp.
4. If you haven't burped in five minutes, you can stop timing.

A person with a normal level of stomach acid will burp within two minutes.

If you haven't burped after five minutes have passed, this suggests your stomach acid is low.

Seek the advice of your nutritional therapist on how to improve your stomach acid.