



SUPPORTING DIGESTION: **HCL CHALLENGE**

The purpose of the HCl Challenge is to “wake up” the cells in your stomach that normally produce hydrochloric (stomach) acid, so they will go back to making the correct amount that you need for proper digestion. *Do not do this challenge if you are taking or have recently used corticosteroid medications because those thin the lining of your stomach.

Follow these steps:

- **Day 1:** Take 1 tablet of [Hydrozyme](#)* in the middle of each meal.
- **Day 2:** Take 2 tablets of Hydrozyme in the middle of each meal.
- **Day 3:** Take 3 tablets of Hydrozyme in the middle of each meal.
- **Day 4:** Take 4 tablets of Hydrozyme in the middle of each meal.
- **Day 5:** Take 5 tablets of Hydrozyme in the middle of each meal.
- **Day 6:** Take 1 tablet of [Betaine Plus HP](#)* (this equals 5 Hydrozyme, so you can take less pills), plus 1 Hydrozyme in the middle of each meal.
- **Day 7:** Take 1 tablet of Betaine Plus HP, plus 2 Hydrozyme in the middle of each meal.

And so on each day...

Just remember that 1 Betaine Plus HP = 5 Hydrozyme, so swap those out at each level to take less pills.

Stop at any point along the way when...

You feel a slight sensation in your stomach a little bit after a meal. Your stomach is located a little left of center on your chest, just at the bottom of your rib cage. This might feel like the beginning of heartburn, but it could also be a warm feeling, or just a tingling. We don't normally feel our stomach - unless it hurts (but we're usually referring to our abdomen/intestines when our stomach "aches").

If you're unsure of what you're feeling, try that dose a couple more times, and if you feel that sensation consistently, you are ready to drop down by one pill.

Stay at that level for each meal until the burning sensation creeps in again, and then step down by one more pill. Continue this process of reducing the number until you no longer need the supplements. Your body is now back at full production!

Sometimes this doesn't happen completely and you may need to take a maintenance dose of one or two on an ongoing basis. This can be the case as we age, when we can't "perfect" our diet, or when we can't get rid of enough stress.

The challenge can also be repeated after a high-stress time, or you can just keep some Betaine HCl on hand to take when you're going through those periods.

How much HCl is too much?

If you produce no stomach acid on your own, you may take between 7-13 Betaine Plus HP! If you get that high, however, you need to look at the co-factors like zinc, thiamine (Vitamin B1), and unrefined salt.

Food & Herbal stomach acid boosters

Not everyone is in a place to try the HCl challenge, and those who are pregnant or very small children may wish to begin with food or herbal options first. Here are some to try:

- Cabbage juice, 15-30 minutes before meals
- Apple cider vinegar tonic, 15-30 minutes before meals
- Sauerkraut juice, 15-30 minutes before meals
- Meat stock or bone broth, at the beginning of meals
- [Herbal bitters](#)* before, during, or after meals