

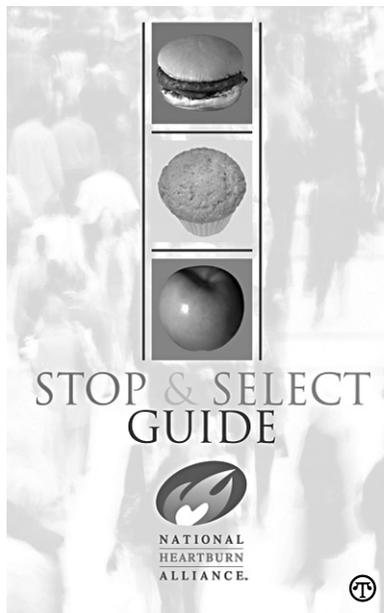
Free Guide Gives The “Green Light” To Heartburn Friendly Foods

(NAPSA)—For the 25 million Americans who suffer from heartburn every day, it may be time to re-think what’s for dinner tonight. A recent survey by National Heartburn Alliance (NHBA) revealed that 92 percent of frequent heartburn sufferers point to food as the primary cause of their digestive discomfort (based on a national survey fielded by Axiom Sigma Marketing in October/November 2001). The good news for sufferers is that anecdotal evidence indicates that changing one’s diet can significantly decrease the number of heartburn episodes. To help sufferers steer clear of potentially troublesome foods and beverages, the NHBA has developed the “Stop & Select Guide,” a tool to help prevent heartburn before it starts.

“Good digestive health is largely related to what we eat,” says National Heartburn Alliance board member and nutritionist Pat Baird. “The NHBA’s ‘Stop & Select Guide’ offers sufferers one option that can help prevent frequent heartburn by providing quick visual cues of a food’s potential to trigger outbreaks.”

Stop, Select & Go

The manual assigns a color code to a variety of foods and beverages based on their acidic value, fat content, ability to decrease the lower esophageal sphincter (LES) tone and/or increase acid secretion. Sufferers can then assess the likelihood of a heartburn episode based on the color code of foods consumed. Using the familiar stop light as a guide, foods coded RED warn sufferers to “STOP and reconsider the choice,” YELLOW items advise to “consume with discretion,” and



GREEN foods are generally a “GO,” with little potential to cause or aggravate heartburn.

The “Stop & Select Guide” encourages users to adopt a healthy diet and pay attention to portion control, as overeating also often contributes to heartburn. Items are listed by standard USDA Food Pyramid food groupings, giving sufferers an easy point of reference when grocery shopping, cooking at home or dining out. The goal of the NHBA guide is to raise sufferers’ awareness of foods that trigger heartburn, so that they can make smart choices for their digestive health.

“Heartburn sufferers need not eliminate all of their favorite foods to avoid digestive discomfort, just those that make them ‘see RED,’” says Baird. “So you may want to skip the french fries and opt for fat-free potato chips instead.”

When Diet is Not Enough

For some people, a change in diet or lifestyle habits is enough to prevent heartburn. However, millions of people suffer from frequent heartburn and for these people, medication is often required to prevent their symptoms. Many may find temporary help from the wide variety of medications available over-the-counter such as antacids and H2-receptor antagonists. More sophisticated medications such as proton pump inhibitors (PPIs), the most powerful inhibitors of acid production, can prevent and even eliminate symptoms in most frequent heartburn sufferers for 24 hours. When taken as prescribed, in the morning preferably before breakfast (J. G. Hatlebakk et al., Blackwell Science Ltd. 2000), PPIs prevent frequent heartburn for an entire 24-hour period.

To obtain a free copy of the NHBA “Stop & Select Guide,” consumers can call toll-free, (877) 471-2081 or visit the NHBA Web site, www.heartburnalliance.org. The site contains the complete “Stop & Select Guide,” tips on stocking the pantry, heartburn-friendly cooking techniques and guidelines for making heartburn-smart choices when dining out.

The National Heartburn Alliance is an organization dedicated to improving the lives of heartburn sufferers through education, information and support. Nationally recognized healthcare professionals, including experts in digestive disease, pharmacy, nutrition and exercise, comprise the Alliance. The NHBA receives support and sponsorship from the Procter & Gamble Health Sciences Institute.