



## The HCl Test

Do not take this test if you are taking any anti-inflammatory medications, including aspirin or NSAIDs.

### Why supplement with HCl?

If you digest poorly, experience acid reflux, or have any other Upper GI issues, temporarily supplementing with Betaine HCl may be helpful to you, as you may be suffering from low stomach acid.

Stomach acid is one of the immune system's first lines of defense. It "sterilizes" and cleans food by killing any potential pathogens and preventing them from getting into your body. Furthermore, it is required to sufficiently break down food in order to absorb and assimilate nutrients, and it stimulates the pancreas and small intestine to produce digestive enzymes and bile. Without adequate stomach acid, you may not be getting the important nutrients your body needs, like the B vitamins and zinc. There are many reasons that your stomach acid levels may be low (e.g. too much stress, refined carbohydrates). Supplementation can help your body begin to start producing its own again. Some of the symptoms that may indicate you are suffering from low stomach acid include:

- Skin problems of any kind
- Undigested food in stool
- Nutritional deficiencies (e.g. zinc)
- Bloating, burping, or gas immediately after meals
- Indigestion, diarrhea or constipation
- Heartburn
- Acid Reflux
- Feeling of excess fullness easily
- Loss of taste for meat
- Food allergies
- Chronic fatigue
- Autoimmune diseases

## **How does the HCl test work?**

The test works by giving you an idea of your stomach's current acid status, and therefore, allows you to better determine how much supplemental HCl you'll need. Please read the entire document thoroughly, as there are some cautionary points.

## **Before the Test.**

Plan at least 1 hour for the test to ensure that you can sit and eat calmly. Eat a normal meal, making sure it consists of a serving of animal protein (approximately the size of your palm). Have a cup of warm water with a spoonful of baking soda mixed in on-hand. If you experience too much "heat" during the test (which may feel like acid reflux or taking a shot of alcohol on an empty stomach, sip the baking soda water mixture until it subsides.

## **The Test.**

**1. Take several bites of food.** Remember to always chew well. Swallow one capsule of your HCl supplement with a just a little bit of water. Do not overdo the water.

**2. Take several more bites of food.** Wait 5-10 minutes. Do you feel any warming sensation?

- If you feel a warming sensation immediately, or within 5-10 minutes of taking one capsule, refer to Scenario #1 below.
- If you do not feel a warming sensation immediately, take a few more bites, followed by another capsule, and wait another 10 minutes.

**3. Repeat this process until you've taken up to 6 higher-strength capsules or 8 lower-strength capsules.** STOP when you feel the slightest bit of a warming sensation.

- If you feel a warming sensation at any point between 2 to 8 capsules, refer to Scenario #2 below.
- If you reach 8 capsules without feeling any warming sensation, refer to Scenario #3 below.

**Scenario # 1: You feel a warming sensation immediately or within 5-10 minutes of taking one HCl capsule. This can mean one of two things:**

1. You have adequate stomach acid.

OR

2. It may indicate that your stomach LINING is compromised. Your stomach lining is meant to handle stomach acid without irritation. However, if it is too thin or damaged, you will need to heal it first so that you can handle the acid that's supposed to be there. How do

you know whether your stomach lining needs healing? Go back and review the symptoms. If symptoms of low stomach acid are definitely present, yet a warming sensation is felt immediately, the stomach lining must be healed first.

**Scenario # 2: You feel a warming sensation at any point between 2 to 8 capsules.**

Back up one capsule to the number you took immediately BEFORE you felt the warming sensation. That will be your approximate dose for about two weeks at every protein-containing meal.

**Note:** I say “approximate dose” because it is important to listen to your body. Always pay attention to how you feel at each meal and what happens to your symptoms as you eat. You may eat a bit less protein at a meal and find that you experience a warming sensation before you’ve reached your dose. That’s okay. Listen to your body and go with what feels right.

**Scenario # 3: You reach 8 capsules without feeling any warming sensation.** This can mean one of two things:

1. You have an adequate stomach lining that is protecting you from the effects of the acid and you don’t need to supplement! How to know if this is you: Do you have any of the symptoms of low stomach acid? If YES, then continue to supplement. I advise a dose of up to 4,000mg per meal of Betaine HCl until symptoms resolve.

OR

2. You have adequate stomach acid and do not need to supplement OR you have very little stomach acid and desperately need supplemental support. Do you have any of the symptoms of low stomach acid? If YES, then continue to supplement. I advise a dose of up to 4,000mg per meal of Betaine HCl until symptoms resolve.