

## ***Peptic Ulcer***

Peptic Ulcer refers to an eroded lesion in the gastric intestinal mucosa. An ulcer may form in any part of the digestive tract which is exposed to acid gastric juice, but is usually found in the stomach and the duodenum. The ulcer located in the stomach is known as gastric ulcer and that located in the duodenum is called a duodenal ulcer. Usually both are grouped together and termed peptic ulcer.

### ***Symptoms***

The most common symptoms of peptic ulcer are sharp and severe pain and discomfort in the upper central abdomen. The pain is commonly described as burning or gnawing in character. Gastric ulcer pain usually occurs an hour after meals, but rarely at night. Duodenal ulcer pain usually occurs between meals when the stomach is empty and is relieved by food, especially milk. It is often described as hunger pain and gets the sufferer out of bed between 2 and 4 a.m. As the disease progresses there is distension of the stomach due to excessive flatulence, besides mental tension, insomnia and a gradual weakening of the body. It may also cause constipation with occasional blood in the stools. If an ulcer bleeds slowly, there is anaemia.

### ***Treatment***

Diet is of utmost importance in the treatment of ulcer. The diet should be so arranged as to provide adequate nutrition to afford rest to the disturbed organs, to maintain continuous neutralization of the gastric acid, to inhibit production of acid and to reduce mechanical and chemical irritation. Milk, cream, butter, fruits, and fresh, raw and boiled vegetables, natural foods and natural vitamin supplements are the best diet for an ulcer patient.

The most effective remedy for peptic ulcers is bananas. They are said to contain an unidentified compound called, perhaps jokingly, vitamin U (against ulcers). Bananas neutralizes the over acidity of the gastric juices and reduces the irritation of the ulcer by coating the lining of the stomach. Banana and milk are considered an ideal diet for the patients who are in an advanced state of the disease.

Almond milk made from blanched almonds in a blender is very beneficial as it binds the excess of acid in the stomach and supplies high quality proteins. Raw goat's milk is also highly beneficial. It actually helps to heal peptic ulcer. Cabbage is regarded as another useful home remedy for peptic ulcers. Cabbage is boiled in water. This water is allowed to cool and taken twice daily. The leaves of kalyana murangal tree, which is a variety of drumstick found in South India, have also proved helpful in the healing of the ulcers. The leaves of this tree are ground into a paste and taken mixed with yogurt daily. Raw vegetables juices, particularly carrot and cabbage juices are beneficial in the treatment of the peptic ulcers. Carrot juice may be taken either alone or in combination with spinach or beat and cucumber. The formula proportions in the case of the first combination are 300 ml. of carrots and 200 ml. of spinach and in case of the second

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combination, 300 ml. of carrots and three ounces each of beets and cucumber to make half a liter of juice. The observance of certain rules by an ulcer patient with regard to eating habits are essential. He should never eat when tired or emotionally upset, nor when he is not hungry even if it is meal time, nor when his mouth is dry. He should chew every morsel thoroughly. He should eat only natural foods and take food in as dry a form as possible. Meals must be small and frequent. All foods and drinks which are either too hot or too cold should be avoided.

The ulcer patient should drink eight to 10 glasses of water every day. However, he should not drink water during or with meals, but only half an hour before or one hour after he has eaten. He should bathe, preferably in cold water, twice daily. Alternate hot and cold hip baths for 10 to 15 minutes and a mud pack applied over the lower abdominal for half an hour daily will help the ulcers to heal. The hip bath or the mud pack should be taken on an empty stomach and should be followed by a walk. In case of haemorrhage in the stomach, a rectal enema should be administered four times daily with water temperature at 110 to 115 ° F. In case of abdominal or stomach pain, hot pack should be placed on the abdomen with water temperature at 120 ° F. A hot pack should also be placed between the shoulder blades.

Daily massages and deep breathing exercises also help. Above all, the patient must try to rid himself of worries and stay cheerful. He should also cultivate regularity in his habit - be it work, exercise or rest. Asanas which are beneficial in the treatment of hyperacidity and ulcers are vajrasana, uttanpadasana, pawanmuktasana, bhujasana, paschimottanasana. Yogic kriyas like jalneti and pranayamas like anuloma-viloma, shitali and sitkari are also beneficial. Hyperacidity does not appear suddenly; it develops gradually and its cure is also a gradual process. The patient should not lose patience but must continue the regimen suggested; this will help him get relief from his ailment.

### **Reference**

Shri H.K. Bakhru. (1999). Natures Cure.