

Living with Acid Reflux

It can be tough to live with acid reflux, even when you're not the one that has it.

Acid reflux and chronic indigestion are no fun. Of course, it's particularly disturbing when you're the person dealing with it, but it can also be rough on the patient's family members.

People who live with those who suffer from acid reflux will often complain that they, too, need to make dietary or lifestyle changes. They can't serve just anything and everything, as certain foods will irritate and upset the stomach of the family member who has acid reflux. While this may be a valid complaint, it's important not to be insensitive to the person who's suffering.

Persistent acid reflux and indigestion certainly are not a choice. No one would choose to go through this amount of discomfort. These people are not simply being picky about what they eat, nor are they trying to be difficult. They are simply being careful to choose the foods that are in their best overall interests. People with acid reflux cannot and should not eat certain foods. If you are a family member living with one who suffers from acid reflux, and you feel that you are missing out on your favorite foods, there may be ways to find a healthy compromise.

When you just can't live without an extra cheese pizza, or a big plate of pasta in zesty tomato sauce, go ahead and have them. If you are the caregiver in your home, cook one meal for yourself and another for the person who suffers from acid reflux. Or, go out for dinner at a restaurant where you can each make your own choices from the menu. Your loved one will understand that you have your own favorite foods, and they won't resent you for making that choice.

It's important to acknowledge the problem and lend your support, but you don't want to single the person out. This can be a tricky balancing act. On the one hand, it's important for your loved one to know that you understand his or her concerns, and you are happy to help with special dietary plans and preparations. On the other hand, you don't want to make them feel guilty for needing attention, or different from the rest. This is especially true in children and teens that suffer from acid reflux, and require sensitivity from you and the rest of your family.

The best way that you can show your support is through your actions. Prepare foods that will be suitable for all family members. Learn about the foods that they should, or should not eat. Don't discuss their condition openly with guests, as this can cause embarrassment and feelings of inadequacy. Encourage your family member to speak openly about his or her condition, but don't force them into it. Some people can be quite sensitive about their eating habits and their condition.

Living with acid reflux may be frustrating at times, even if you're not the one who suffers from it. Be flexible and supportive, kind and understanding. Put yourself in their position, and ask yourself how you would like to be treated. Being supportive is the best way to encourage your loved one to feel better and ultimately live a happier, healthier life.