



REGENERA  
MEDICAL

# Reader's Digest

By Dawn Yanek | June 2019

READER'S DIGEST

**T**HERE'S HEARTBURN, AND then there's heartburn. Three years ago, Elroy Vojdani, MD, experienced a debilitating and chronic version of it. "It was a ten-out-of-ten pain, and I would literally keel over at my desk, not able to do anything else," says Dr. Vojdani, the founder of Regenera Medical in Los Angeles. "This would happen every day for a week, every one to two months."

Serious problems such as gastric ulcers and pancreatitis had been ruled out, so his doctors just kept recommending higher doses of the same drugs. But Dr. Vojdani worried about taking Prilosec because long-term use has been linked to osteoporosis and possibly irritable bowel syndrome. Tums and Zantac helped but didn't fix the underlying issue. He needed a better solution, but he was stumped.

That's when Dr. Vojdani turned to supplements, taking cues from his study of functional medicine, which looks to address the root of a problem and treat each patient with a personalized mix of interventions. After he identified and eliminated his trigger foods—including his beloved "bullet-proof coffee," a homemade blend of black coffee, coconut milk, and medium-chain triglyceride (MCT) oil—he decided to try some of the alternative remedies he'd been learning about.

The next time his heartburn hit, he took a stomach-soothing blend of marshmallow root, licorice, and aloe extracts (you can find it online

and in health food stores). He also took probiotics, the amino acid L-glutamine, and a low dose of melatonin, which he'd read could reduce heartburn by tightening the lower esophageal sphincter and preventing acid reflux. "Within a day, my symptoms subsided," he says. "I didn't need to use [medication] at all during this episode, which had never happened before." After two weeks, he slowly began to reintroduce his

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trigger foods, and after two months, he stopped the supplements altogether and today uses them only if he overindulges. "I'm now two years out," he adds, "and I haven't needed Zantac or Prilosec once."

These days, Dr. Vojdani follows that same protocol with patients looking to get their heartburn under control. He is one of many doctors who have experienced the benefits of supplements firsthand for conditions that include vascular issues, prediabetes, brain health, and mood disorders. Researchers agree that it is best to get your nutrition from food. But there is a growing body of scientific literature that shows that these complements to conventional medication can help

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