MANAGING HEARTBURN INCIDENCE AMONG SCHOOL PERSONNEL
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Heartburn is a burning sensation behind the breast bone often accompanied by sour taste in the back of the mouth. It can result from gastroesophageal reflux. This is a condition in which stomach acid flows up into the esophagus. Heartburn can also result from over eating. It can also be caused by gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). Untreated GERD can develop to inflamed esophagus (esophagitis) and in some, Barrett’s esophagus, a precancerous condition, may develop. This is one very crucial reason why a person who has frequent bouts of heartburn should seek medical attention.

Stress can also trigger heartburns. For teachers who frequently suffer stress from work and managing various personality of children, heartburn is experienced by most of them. As school nurses, it is important to educate them about this condition and how they can prevent it.

Some ways to lessen the heartburn episodes are taking note of what you eat and drink. Lifestyle changes is important. Weight control is necessary as well since obesity is a major risk factor for heartburn.

Avoiding heartburn triggers is necessary. Avoid fatty or fried foods, alcohol, chocolate, caffeine, peppermint because all these can increase reflux. Sour foods such as citrus fruits, orange juice, and tomato sauce can irritate the esophageal lining triggering symptoms of heartburn.

Tight clothes and belts can also cause heartburns by putting pressure on the stomach and pushing acid upwards. Loosening the belt is essential. After eating, lying down for two hours should be avoided. When one is in an upward position, this allows gravity to help keep acid down away from the esophagus.

Avoid smoking and excessive alcoholic drinks. Drinking enough water when taking medications is also important. Chewing sugarless gum after meals can also help preventing
heartburn because chewing the gum can stimulate production of saliva which helps neutralize stomach acid.

References: