

Understanding the Use of PPI's

Acid Medication called Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPI's)

There was a recent blog by the President of the American College of Gastroenterology (ACG), Dr. Kenneth DeVault, identifying the potential risks of long-term use of PPI's and various side effects. Because of the availability of over-the-counter and generic PPI's more patients are managing on chronic, long-term PPI's with no overall plan to stop or decrease the therapy.

There have been observational studies done over the past several years that identified a number of potential adverse effects of PPI therapy that include:

1. Increased risk of fracture due to a decrease in calcium absorption
2. Increased risk of *C.diff (Clostridium difficile)* infection
3. Increased risk of infections such as community and hospital acquired pneumonia
4. Drug interactions, most importantly to clopidogrel (Plavix)
5. Decrease in vitamin B₁₂ stores
6. Decreased serum magnesium
7. Increased risk of chronic kidney disease (CKD)
8. Increased risk of dementia

The ACG believes that hip fractures and osteoporosis should only be a concern in those with other risk factors, PPI's might increase the risk of *C.diff* and agreed that there is a small increased risk of pneumonia on PPI's. They did not feel the interaction with clopidogrel to be clinically significant. The ACG felt that studies regarding chronic kidney disease and dementia were not conclusive. Vitamin B12 and magnesium levels can be easily monitored.

If you wish to discuss medication options please call our office at (724) 482-6062 to make an appointment with your gastroenterologist.