


# Cutting back on your PPI

## What are Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs)?

Proton Pump Inhibitors, or PPIs, are a class of drug used to treat problems such as heartburn or stomach ulcers. Here is a list of the PPI drugs available in Canada:


	<b>PPI Drugs Available in Canada</b>	• Dexlansoprazole (Dexilant®)	• Omeprazole (Losec®, Olex®)
		• Esomeprazole (Nexium®)	• Pantoprazole (Pantoloc®, Tecta®)
		• Lansoprazole (Prevacid®)	• Rabeprazole (Pariet®)

## Why should I use less of, or stop using my PPI?

**As life changes, your medication needs may change as well. Medications that were once good for you, may not be the best choice for you now** - Deprescribing.org

While PPIs are effective for treating many stomach problems, they are often only needed for a short period of time. Research has shown that for some people, doses can be safely lowered or the drug may be used just when needed for symptom relief.


While PPIs are generally a safe group of medications, they can still cause headaches, nausea, diarrhea and rashes. They may also increase your risk of:

	• <b>Low levels of Vitamin B12 and Magnesium</b>	• <b>Pneumonia</b>
	• <b>Bone fractures</b>	• <b>Intestinal infections such as <i>C. difficile</i></b>

## How can I reduce heartburn, reflux or stomach pain without my PPI?

<b>Lifestyle Changes</b>	• Avoid food triggers (eg. coffee, alcohol, spicy foods, chocolate)	• Elevate the head of your bed
	• Avoid food 2-3 hours before bedtime	• Lose weight
		• Quit Smoking

Manage occasional heartburn with over the counter drugs such as:

	<b>Over the Counter Options</b> <i>For occasional heartburn</i>	• Tums®	• Pepcid®
		• Roloids®	• Olex®
		• Zantac®	• Gaviscon®

## What to do if stomach problems continue

If heartburn, reflux, or stomach pain continues after 3-7 days and interferes with normal activities, please talk to a doctor, nurse practitioner or pharmacist. They can help decide whether you should return to a previous PPI dose or whether to use the PPI 'on-demand' (daily until your symptoms stop).

Farrell B, Pottier K, Thompson W, et al. Deprescribing proton pump inhibitors: Evidence-based clinical practice guideline. *Can Fam Physician*. 2017;63(5):354-364. PMID: 28500192; PMCID: PMC5429051

Bruyère Research Institute. Is a Proton Pump Inhibitor still needed? Deprescribing.org. Updated August 2018. Accessed April 9, 2022. [https://deprescribing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Deprescribing-Pamphlet\\_PPI\\_ENG\\_CFP.pdf](https://deprescribing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Deprescribing-Pamphlet_PPI_ENG_CFP.pdf)

Bruyère Research Institute. Deprescribing: Reducing medications safely to meet life's changes - Focus on Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs). Deprescribing.org. Updated August 2018. Accessed April 9, 2022. <https://deprescribing.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Deprescribing-focus-on-PPIs-FINAL-Mar-7-2018.pdf>