

Drug Combination Of Antacid And H2 Antagonist

Brigham & Women's Hospital



Heartburn is a prevailing condition for many Americans that can lead to gastro reflux disease, scarring of the esophagus, painful or difficult swallowing, and precancerous lesions. More than 60 million Americans have heartburn at least once a month, and about 15 million have it daily. Antacids have long been known to temporarily relieve the symptoms of heartburn.

“ Researchers at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, a teaching hospital at Harvard Medical School, in Boston have incorporated antacids into a more effective, longer-lasting medication for heartburn relief. Michael J. Wolfe, M.D. (now section chief of gastroenterology at Boston University Medical Center), combined standard antacids with H2 antagonist pharmaceuticals to create the new medication.

H2 antagonists are drugs that block the activity of histamine along the stomach wall, thereby decreasing the amount of acid these cells produce. The “double punch” of antacid and H2 antagonist (such as Pepcid™) provides immediate

and longer-lasting relief from heartburn discomfort. Prior to this discovery, medical researchers believed that using both these medications together would decrease the effectiveness of the H2 antagonist.

Brigham and Women's Hospital licensed the technology to Johnson & Johnson/Merck Consumer Pharmaceuticals Co., which subsequently developed a new version of Pepcid™ called Pepcid Complete™. Pepcid Complete is highly regarded as an over-the-counter medication that provides heartburn relief for millions of people.

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