

## Like a ruminant

Many years of reflux are finally over. Charlotte Witzke recounts her ordeal and tells about a small implant.



Actually, she is a lady with a zest for life. But the acid reflux made eating miserable for her. It all started more than ten years ago. Foods would regularly come up from her stomach all the way into her mouth, even while standing or sitting. “I felt like a ruminant,” she says laughing, “mashed potatoes and veal patties would keep coming back up three or four times during the afternoon.”

A daily pill of acid blocker helped Charlotte Witzke keep the burning sensation of pain in her oesophagus under control. This is because, besides food remnants, reflux also causes the transport of corrosive stomach acid, and this stomach acid causes considerable damage. The sensitive mucosa in the oesophagus is particularly affected, but the vocal cords and teeth can also suffer damage. The stomach acid sometimes reaches the lungs, which can lead to asthma and other chronic respiratory problems.

Charlotte Witzke had originally come to terms with the fact that food residues were coming up. In June 2020, during a routine coloscopy, she asked the gastroenterologist to examine her stomach as well. It was very clear that the oesophagus was severely affected by the acid coming from the stomach. The cause of the reflux also became apparent during this examination. A diaphragmatic hernia, which had caused the sphincter between the stomach and the oesophagus to slip up over the diaphragm. This meant that the sphincter could no longer function properly.

Years of taking acid blockers failed to prevent the damage to the oesophagus, because pills can't fix a mechanically induced problem, but rather alleviate the symptoms at best. That acid blockers are actually only useful for a short-term therapy is something easily forgotten nowadays.

The gastroenterologist referred the patient to the Hirslanden BeauSite Clinic, where Prof. Dr. Jörg Zehetner inserted the RefluxStop implant in a minimally invasive procedure on July 23, 2020. “Since the procedure, nothing has ever come up again. I would have this surgery again in a heartbeat.”

### Mehr Informationen



Dr. med. Jörg Zehetner,  
Professor (USC)

Klinik Beau-Site Hirslanden Bern  
Telefon 031 312 61 11  
praxis.zehetner@hirslanden.ch