

# Bloating and Flatulence

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Bloating and flatulence is the product of excessive gas resulting from fermentation / putrefaction in the digestive tract. This is due to incomplete food breakdown (digestion) and poor digestive function. Excessive gas and poor digestion can lead to a number of associated symptoms such as:

- Coated tongue
- Bad breath and sour taste
- Headaches / migraines
- Bloating / gas
- Backache
- Lack of energy
- Colic and trapped wind
- Haemorrhoids and varicose veins
- Smelly flatulence
- Heart burn

Many people will use antacids and charcoal as a way of managing symptoms but both have their own side effects and often, if they work, will only do so for a short time and without addressing the cause.

To address the cause, we need to understand the factors which influence digestion food breakdown and digestive function. They are:

- Lack of chewing
- Excess food
- Foods which you are sensitive to
- Lack of protective probiotic bacteria
- Stress
- Lack of nutrients in diet
- Stimulants (coffee, cigarettes etc.)
- Certain drugs
- Lack of digestive enzymes
- Foods containing elements which cannot be broken down
- Excess putrefactive and fermenting bacteria, yeast etc.
- Poor liver function
- Poor pancreatic function
- Diet high in sugar and processed foods
- Alcohol

**Fortunately, digestions can often easily be corrected by adopting the appropriate measures:**

## **A. Avoid constipation**

Many people have lost all awareness of 'the need to go' due to repeatedly ignoring the call of nature. The best method to retrain yourself is to make a point of every morning of going to the spend 3 to 5 minutes in the bathroom in a squatted position whilst sipping a hot drink. Alternatively, sit on the toilet with your knees higher than your hips and your arms above your head. This can be achieved by raising your feet (ie. On a telephone book) and crossing your hands above your head. These exercises need to be followed regardless of results for at least a month!

## **B. Stress management**

Stress has many detrimental effects upon digestion. Avoid eating under stress and stimulants (coffee, coke, cigarettes etc.). Practice a few deep breathing exercises first thing in the morning

and last thing at night and set 5 to 10 minutes in your day to sit still and relax. Enrol yourself in a yoga, T'ai Chi or a relaxation class. Exercise or take up a relaxing hobby.

**C. Eat small quantities of foods, chew thoroughly and avoid drinking with food.**

All this will ensure that your digestive enzymes are more effective at breaking the food down and prevent any residue to ferment and create gas.

**D. Avoid skipping meals**

This will ensure that your digestion is ticking over and never completely shuts down and will up with air. The digestive system will shut down when going without food for more than 6 hours as a survival mechanism; it will then be less effective when you start eating again after that and will have filled with swallowed air.

**E. Diet**

Certain foods will create gas and are best avoided or greatly reduced:

- a) Processed foods contain a number of indigestible fats (trans-fats) and sugars (inverted sugar) which will be feeding yeast and fermenting bacteria and contribute to gas. They are also very high in salt which irritates the gut and contributes to disturbed gut Ph, another cause of constipation and gas production.
- b) Pulses contain a poorly digested fibre and are best sprouted or cooked in three different waters to wash it out.
- c) Foods from the onion family (garlic, leaks, etc.) are rich in sulphur amino acid which will create smelly gas when released.
- d) Foods from the brassica family (cabbage, brussel sprouts etc.) also contain sulphur and are best mixed with other vegetables.
- e) Foods you are sensitive to such as

- Grains : .....
- Dairy foods : .....
- Yeasted foods : .....
- Other foods : .....

**F. Other useful tips:**

- a) Ground linseeds (2 parts) mixed with ground sunflower seeds (1 part) and ground pumpkin seeds (1 part) sprinkled liberally over food.
- b) Linseeds soaked overnight in a large glass of water and taken first thing in the morning. As much as two tablespoons twice daily may be used. Both the water and the seeds should be consumed.
- c) The juice of half a lemon in hot water first thing in the morning.
- d) Liver and colon cleansing programme.