



**BEAT THE BLOAT
HOW TO CURE IT!**

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How To Beat The Bloat

Digestive discomfort after meals can be incredibly uncomfortable.

Research shows that up to 25% of people experience it to some degree, yet less than 10% do anything about it.

It's even more common among those with gastrointestinal disorders, such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO).

Fortunately, some straightforward diet changes can help to dramatically improve recurrent digestive symptoms in as little as 7 days.

Before we begin, it helps to understand how your digestive issues are intertwined, and why they're occurring in the first place.

Stomach bloating (distention) is common in gastrointestinal disorders, especially irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

However, it also occurs in the absence of other medical conditions.



What Causes Bloating Issues?

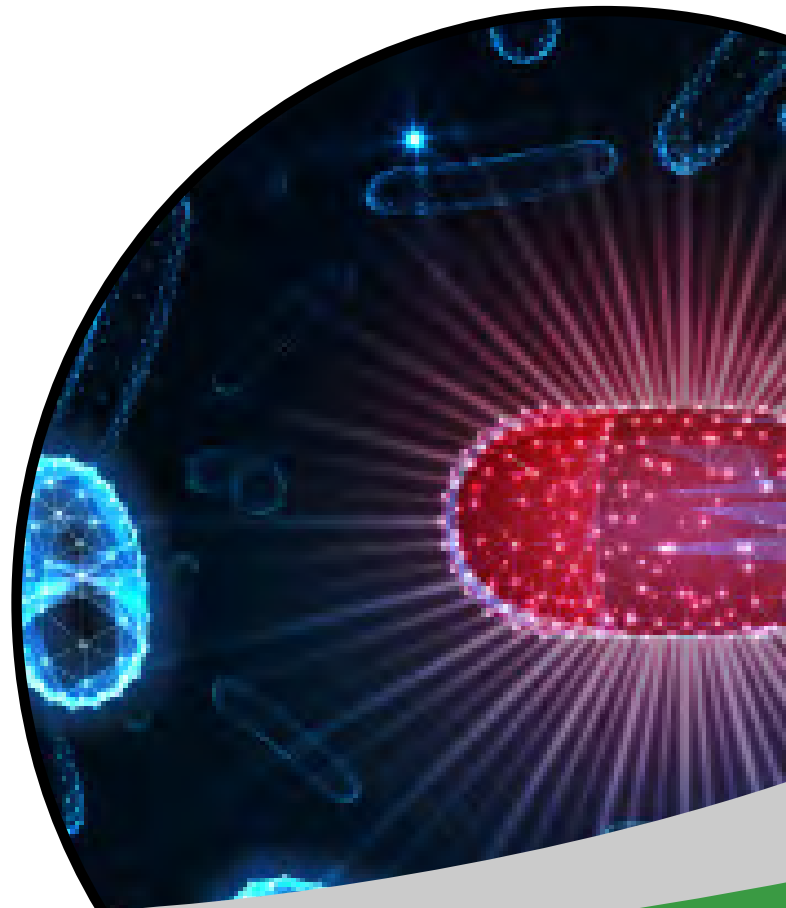
One of the main culprits to cause bloating is excessive intestinal gas, known medically as flatulence.

It's created when gut bacteria "feed" on undigested food particles in the large intestine. Gas is a natural by-product of that process.

The exact causes of excessive bloating, gas and related symptoms vary from person to person, and sometimes between episodes.

But it's typically the result of one or more of the following;

- Gut bacteria imbalances (gut dysbiosis)
- Unusually slow digestion
- Abnormal abdominal muscle reflexes
- Increased nerve perception of pain
- Food sensitivities (more on that below)
- Psychological distress
- Food Sensitivity/ Food Intolerance
- Mucosal immune activation
- Abnormal viscerosomatic reflexes/ abdomino-phrenic dyscoordination
- Altered gut flora/ abnormal colonic fermentation
- Excessive gas/ focal or general GI gas accumulation/abnormal gas handling
- Visceral hypersensitivity
- Abnormal visceral reflexes
- Constipation/hard stools
- Altered motility
- Gender/Sex hormones



7 Techniques To Help

7 proven techniques to help you get started... I've saved the best till last..

Take Peppermint Oil Capsules In Advance

The ancient Egyptians, Romans and other civilizations reportedly used peppermint for its pain-relieving and anti-bacterial properties.

These days peppermint oil capsules are used as an effective natural remedy for reducing bloating, gas and stomach pain.

In fact, ingesting peppermint oil is shown to improve symptoms for up to 79% of those with IBS.

This 1-month clinical study compared 52 patients taking a peppermint oil capsule 3-4 times per day vs 49 taking a placebo capsule. Neither the subjects nor the researchers knew which patients were receiving which capsule.

Of the peppermint oil group:

- 79% experienced a reduction in abdominal pain 83% had less bloating (distension)
- 83% had reduced stool frequency
- 73% had fewer borboymgi (stomach gurgling)
- 79% experienced less flatulence.

Peppermint oil is thought to work because of the menthol, which helps relax the stomach and digestive tract muscles. This helps speed up digestion in the stomach, which improves symptoms of nausea, indigestion and abdominal pain.

Additionally, it can slow down motility in the colon (large intestine) by reducing intestinal spasms. In fact, when added to barium enema preparations during rectal exams, peppermint oil reduces colon spasms by 25 to 30%.

Modify Your Main Meal Portion Sizes

Persistent stomach bloating (distension) not only looks awkward, but can feel very uncomfortable too.

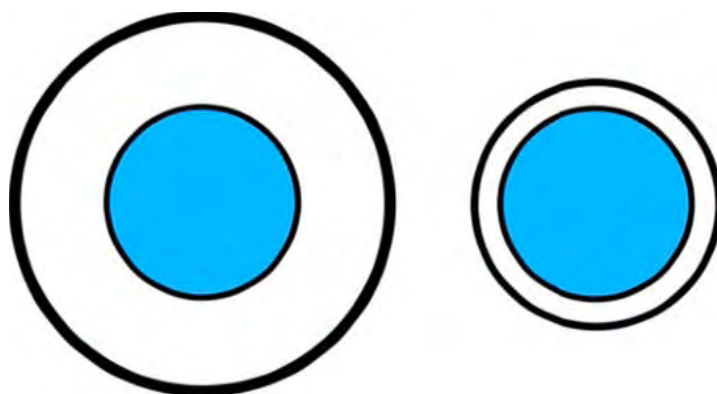
This is because it's also a sensory issue, and some are extremely sensitive to the sensation of the stomach stretching after meals.

For this reason, aiming to reduce the portion sizes of your main meals can work wonders.

Using smaller plates at meals is a simple way to “trick” your brain into thinking more food was eaten.

For example, which of the plates below looks “fuller” to you?

WHICH PLATE IS FULLER?



Of course it's the one on the right. However, both dishes actually contain exactly the same amount.

Psychologists have been closely studying this phenomenon, known as the Delboeuf illusion, and it really helps to cut portion sizes down at main meals.

By serving main meals on a smaller dish, you're likely to eat a smaller quantity in one sitting, which can provide relief for bloating.



Probiotics Can Help Get Rid of Bloating

Probiotics are beneficial bacteria found naturally in certain foods and supplements.

There is loads of evidence they can help with digestive health, especially recurring issues.

In a study of 122 IBS patients, a daily dose of *Bifidobacterium bifidum* significantly improved bloating and pain symptoms compared to placebo.

Comparison of *B. bifidum* and placebo on IBS symptoms measured by subjective global assessment (SGA) over 8 weeks. Lower score is better.

Comparison of change in IBS symptoms with *B. bifidum* vs. placebo before and after treatment. Lower score is better.

Looking at specific symptoms, it's clear improvements were seen across the spectrum from pain to bloating.

These results are supported by another trial that used a combination of bacterial strains for a 4-week period, one of which was also from the *Bifidobacterium* species.

Note that only certain strains of probiotics at specific doses have so far shown to be useful for bloating, when taken for at least 4 weeks:

- *Lactobacillus acidophilus* and *Bifidobacterium infantis* at a dose of 1×10^{10} cfu per day.
- *Lactobacillus acidophilus* plus *Bifidobacterium lactis* at a dose of 2×10^{11} cfu per day.
- *Bifidobacterium bifidum* at a dose of 1×10^9 cfu per day.

Interestingly, it's not uncommon for the placebo (fake pill) groups in these studies to experience digestive improvements. So there is certainly a placebo effect at play to some degree.

If you decide to try a probiotic, I recommend you first read through a detailed analysis of probiotics for IBS.

Meditation or Gut-Specific Hypnotherapy

Meditation is the ancient spiritual practice of connecting the mind with the body.

It's known to be an effective alternative health strategy for relieving psychological stress, which is closely linked to digestive stress via the gut-brain axis.

A small study of 13 IBS patients showed significant improvement in bloating with 15-minute meditation sessions, twice daily. Study participants reported that the benefits continued at 3-month and 1-year follow-up visits.

There are several guided meditation apps for beginners such as Aware, Headspace and Calm. You can trial Aware for free and then save 50% off your first subscription with this unique code: AWARE50.

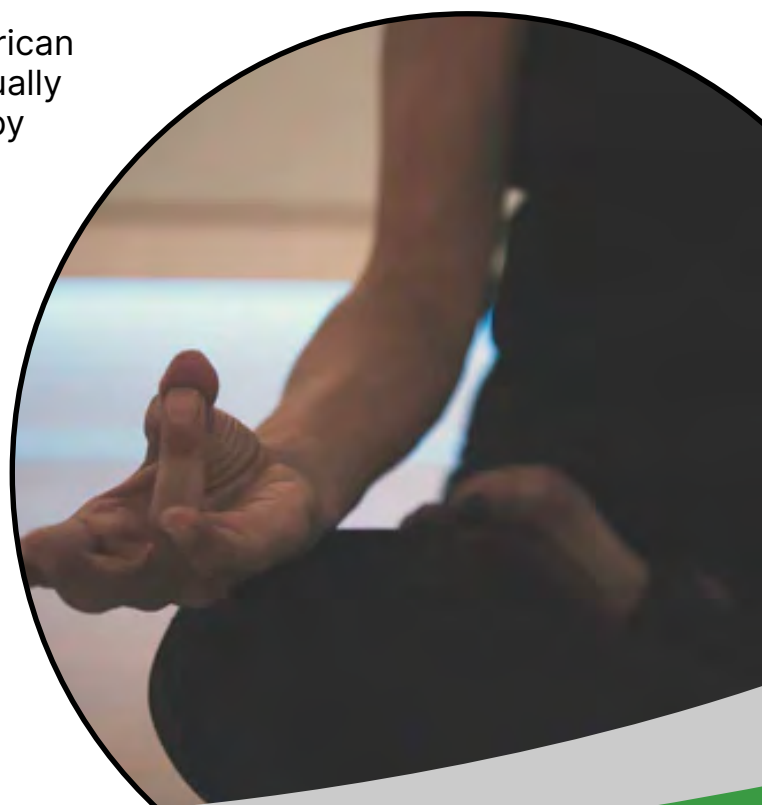
Gut Hypnotherapy

The other alternative health strategy for overcoming digestive issues is called Gut-Directed Hypnotherapy (GDH) (it's different to the hypnotherapy we see on television).

A review of eight randomized-controlled trials totalling 464 patients found that GDH significantly improved abdominal pain in the short term (3 months) and overall IBS symptoms.

It may sound “hippy-dippy”, but the American Gastroenterological Association has actually approved the use of clinical hypnotherapy for treating IBS since 1996.

The only clinical hypnotherapy treatment resource developed specifically for the physical and emotional symptoms of IBS is The IBS Audio Program 100™ (available to download or on CD).



Start With Low-Intensity Exercise

Low-intensity exercise is believed to help the large intestine move its contents through quicker.

This is thought to reduce gas and bloating.

In one small study, 8 volunteers (7 with IBS) received infusions of gas into the digestive tract.

They then alternated between rest and low-intensity exercise on a stationary bicycle while researchers took measurements.

Subjects at rest retained 45% of infused gas compared to only 24% during exercise, which is almost half the amount.

A much larger, well-designed study found that moderately increasing physical activity for 12 weeks resulted in significant improvements in IBS symptoms.

Looking at the same participants five years later, those who exercised on average 5 hours per week (walking, cycling, and aerobics) had significantly fewer IBS symptoms compared to before they began exercising.

They reported less pain, less abdominal bloating, and less dissatisfaction with their bowel habits. They also reported less depression and anxiety.

The psychological benefits of exercise may also play a role in the results we've seen. People just feel better in general when they're physically active, and may have a greater sense of control over their IBS.



Limit Products Known to Cause Digestive Stress

Certain foods and drinks can irritate the digestive system and make symptoms worse.

It's worthwhile limiting or temporarily eliminating these:

- **Coffee:** Caffeine can have a stimulative effect on the intestinal tract. This speeds up the transit time of food during digestion and can make symptoms worse.
- **Spicy foods:** Capsaicin is the compound in chillies and peppers that causes the spicy flavour. It can irritate the intestinal tract and worsen symptoms.
- **Alcohol:** Alcohol can irritate the digestive system and speed up the passage of stools.
- **High-fructose foods:** Fructose is a type of sugar common in fruit, and is also a FODMAP. Excessive fructose intake, even in those who aren't sensitive, can cause diarrhea because it pulls water into the digestive tract.
- **High fat foods:** High fat, fried and oily foods may not digest properly, causing discomfort and diarrhea in some people. It is best to minimise these types of foods when experiencing an episode.

If slowed clearance of gas from the intestinal tract is your issue, it may help to avoid foods that increase gas volume:

- **Carbonated beverages:** These may introduce more gas into the digestive tract.
- **Chewing gum:** Gum and hard candy may also cause you to swallow excess air, thereby increasing gas production.

Many chewing gums and hard candies also contain sugar alcohols (not the alcohol that makes you drunk), which are largely indigestible. This is why excess chewing gum has a laxative effect and warning on the label.



Try The Breakthrough Low Fodmap Diet for 7 Days

The number one treatment for digestive issues that all modern doctors and dietitians recommend is a low FODMAP diet.

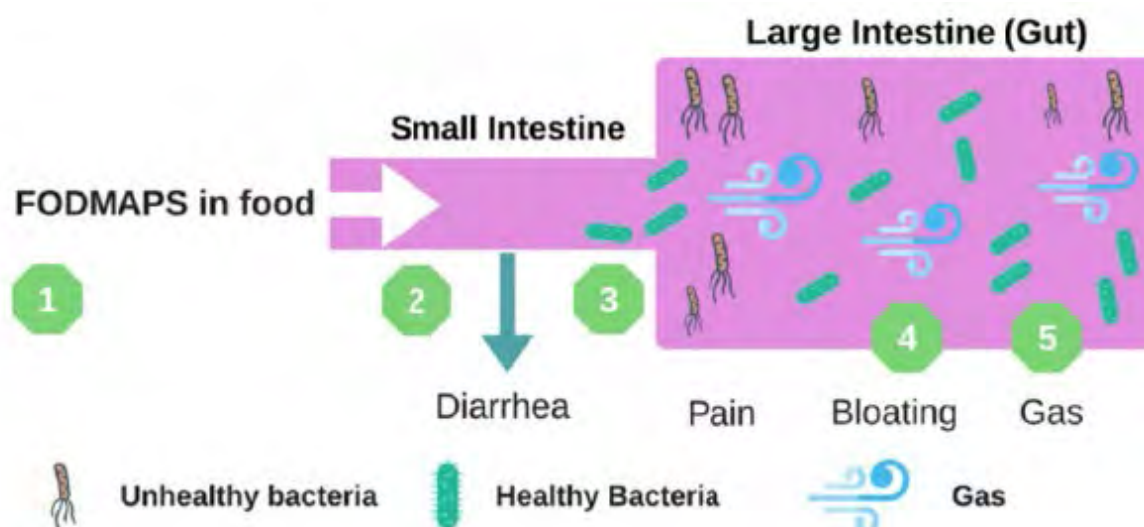
It refers to a modified eating pattern that is split into two distinct phases (elimination and reintroduction), and has a very low amount of food compounds called FODMAPs.

If your gastrointestinal system is poor at digesting these food compounds, they begin to ferment in the lower part of your large intestine (gut).

This fermentation process draws in water and produces carbon dioxide, hydrogen, and/or methane gas that causes the intestine to stretch and expand.

The result is strong pain, visible bloating, excessive gas and other related symptoms. This diagram illustrates the process from step 1 through to step 5:

1. Food is eaten that contains FODMAPs.
2. Some FODMAPs may pull water into the small intestine, causing diarrhea
3. In those with IBS, FODMAPs can travel to the large intestine (gut) largely undigested.
4. When “unhealthy” bacteria interact with FODMAPs in the gut, it causes a range of symptoms such as bloating, gas and pain.
5. Different people are sensitive to different FODMAPs, so it’s important to identify which ones are the culprit.





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