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NUTRITION

5 EASY WAYS TO *beat the bloat*

simple solutions for anyone struggling with bloating &
digestive discomfort



Bloating, cramping and general digestive discomfort bring misery to the lives of millions, and often unnecessarily. With a little know-how, it's easy to tame troublesome tummy issues, and these few simple steps might be all you need to get yourself back on the road to feeling amazing without spending a fortune.

With close to 10 years of experience in the world of nutrition, I have been focusing primarily on digestive disorders.

1. *Think* about your food



The very first step in the digestive process is a really important one but it's often something that people don't even think about. It's called the **cephalic phase** of digestion and it's triggered when you look, smell or see food. You are literally whetting your appetite. When you start thinking about the lovely meal you are going to prepare, you are getting your digestive juices flowing. The enzymes in your saliva help you break down your food more easily so, when the time comes, your body is actually ready to start digesting your food before you have even cut the first slice – never mind actually put anything in your mouth.

It may sound an incredibly simple step – and it is – but these days we are often so busy rushing around that we don't make the time to think about our food in this way. If you are someone who is always on the go, sometimes eating at your desk or in the car, this is a vital step you are missing out on.

FIX IT: Consciously spend a little bit of time thinking about your lovely lunch to get the digestive juices going.

2. *Chew* your food thoroughly



Let's get one thing straight: your tummy doesn't have teeth. Chewing your food is vital, and this is the second phase of digestion. With proper chewing, you are mechanically breaking down the food into smaller pieces so that there's a greater surface area and the digestive enzymes can get to work more easily doing their job.

You might have heard the saying, you are what you eat. To be correct, you are what you can absorb and, if you're not chewing properly, it's highly likely that you will not be digesting your food properly and you certainly won't be absorbing it well either.

The other thing that happens when you don't chew properly is that the food takes much longer to break down and, as it hangs around in your digestive system, it can start to ferment, causing uncomfortable, wind gas and bloating.

FIX IT: You don't need to chew a specific number of times because that will depend on what you are eating and various other things. However, the ideal scenario is that you chew it sufficiently so that should you be asked to spit it out, no one would have a clue what you had been eating. A further tell-tale sign that you are not digesting your food properly is if you start to see undigested food in your stool.

3. Consider whether you have too much or too little *stomach acid*

The pharmaceutical heartburn medication business is booming because so many people believe their digestive troubles are linked to too much stomach acid. What nutrition professionals find more frequently in clinic is the opposite is the case.

As you age, and as a result of stress and some over-the-counter medications, your stomach acid levels can drop to the extent you don't produce enough to do the job of digesting food sufficiently.

Why is this important? Quite simply, the stomach acid you produce not only kills any bacteria in the food you are eating, but it also breaks down the protein in your meal. If you're not properly digesting the protein element in the food, food can start to ferment, creating gases that force up the esophageal sphincter muscle (a type of muscle flap) and what little stomach acid there is can escape. So the burning feeling, especially if accompanied by smelly gas, can be a sign your digestion isn't working as well as it might be.

FIX IT: One solution is to take a little tot (about a teaspoon) of apple cider vinegar before each main meal. It is important that you choose apple cider vinegar with mother like [this one](#) rather than one you can buy in the supermarket (that's for your chips).

There are people who genuinely produce too much stomach acid and, if you try the apple cider vinegar trick and it seems to make things worse, you can neutralise the acid by taking a little bicarbonate of soda.



4. Consider taking *digestive enzymes*



Another thing that happens as you age is that you naturally start producing fewer digestive enzymes - this alongside making less stomach acid.

FIX IT: Some foods are naturally higher than others in these helpful enzymes. Try eating a little pineapple or papaya before a meal and see if this works for you. For many people, this advice won't necessarily be practical.

That's when taking a digestive enzyme capsule (available from health food shops) might be helpful. It will give your system a gentle boost to help it do its job properly.

5. Take a little *stroll*



When you walk shortly after you've eaten, magic starts to happen. To start, a gentle walk lowers your blood sugar levels, so your body makes less insulin. As insulin is the fat storage hormone, taking a gentle stroll for 15 minutes makes you less likely to store fat. When it comes to digestion, can help you digest your food better.

There is also evidence to support this. A German study back in 2008 showed that this was because a gentle walk increased the speed at which the food moved through the digestive system.

As a summary, if you find the above tips useful and have digestive symptoms, best not to ignore these. Book your free discovery call with Emine.

Go ahead, try these tips out for yourself and see if any of your symptoms improve. If you have been struggling with digestive problems for a while, take a look at my Digestion Rescue programme designed to help you understand what might be going on in your gut and take greater steps towards a resolution.





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