



7 Mistakes that Make Bloating Worse

AND WHAT TO DO INSTEAD!

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#1

Grazing throughout the day.

One of the most common mistakes I see clients making is grazing. This might happen because you aren't eating meals and snacks that are well-balanced and filling, leading to grazing throughout the day. It's a common belief that multiple mini-meals is better for digestion when really, grazing can worsen bloat by not giving your digestive system a break and deactivating a function called the migrating motor complex (MMC).

The MMC is an electrical current that pushes food particles, bacteria, and debris from the small intestine to the large intestine. If this doesn't happen, these food particles can sit in the small intestine, ferment, and produce gas, leading to bloat!

Do this instead:

- Support the MMC and give your gut a break by leaving 3-5 hours in between meals/snacks and 12 hrs overnight.
- At each snack or meal, ensure you eat enough protein, fats, and fiber so that you stay fuller longer. Doing so will also balance your blood sugar for sustained energy and make it easier to limit grazing.
- In your email, you'll soon receive my meal template and grocery list to learn how to balance your plate and create satisfying gut nourishing meals each and every time!



#2

Only focusing on what you are eating, not HOW you are eating.

We've all done it — rushed through our lunch and barely chewed our food during a busy workday or quickly shoveled food down after a long day where we barely ate. Unfortunately, eating while in a stressed state can negatively impact your digestion, no matter how healthy your meal is. To set your body up for optimal digestion, we need to turn on the parasympathetic nervous system (also known as your rest and digest mode!).

In addition, hormones activated in response to stress (cortisol and adrenaline) can limit digestion by inhibiting the secretion of digestive secretions, and enzymes and tensing of the muscles in the digestive tract. Consequently, this results in food moving too slowly through your digestive tract, increasing gas and bloat.

In the modern world, eliminating stress entirely is a bit unrealistic. However, we can prioritize practicing stress management techniques to handle stress better.

Do this instead:

- Before you start eating, remove distractions, sit down (no standing while eating!), sit up straight, and practice 30 seconds of deep breathing or a couple rounds of 4 count box breathing (this will help prime your digestive system for the food it's about to receive).
- Work on being present during meals (that means taking time away from your computer, phone, and TV), slow down (put that utensil down between bites!), and chew chew chew each bite properly!
- Digestion starts in the mouth, so chewing your food well is essential to supporting digestion and reducing uncomfortable bloat. Remember, your stomach doesn't have teeth so when we don't chew well it takes a lot of extra work to digest foods.
 - Aim to chew 20-30 times per bite or until applesauce consistency! REALLY focus on doing this for a full day- you'll see it's a game changer!

#3

Overdoing it on certain healthy foods that trigger bloat.

Cruciferous vegetables — like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, collard greens, kale, Brussels sprouts — beans and legumes, artichokes, onion, and garlic.

My clients have good intentions by filling up their plates with these foods as they are fantastic for our health. However, they can be hard to digest and cause bloating, especially when consumed raw or in large portions.

So, if you notice significant bloating after eating chickpea pasta alongside broccoli and kale for dinner, this might be an important one for you.

Do this instead:

- Try reducing portions and including more vegetables that are easier on your digestive tract, such as:
 - carrots, turnips, cucumbers, zucchini, green beans, squash (acorn, kabocha, delicata), eggplant, tomatoes, greens (arugula, mesclun, spinach, watercress), bell peppers, avocados, and potatoes
- For the ones that are a bit tougher to digest, try different cooking preparations, such as steaming, sauteing, roasting, blending or adding them to a soup. Cooking these veggies can help to break down the fibers and make them easier to tolerate.
- It's further important not to avoid these foods altogether if you can handle them in smaller portions. Diversity is key to gut health, so even if you can tolerate just 1-2 stalks of broccoli as part of your meal, that's great! Keep the portions small and work your way up slowly.
- Taking digestive enzymes 5-10 minutes before meals (including alpha-galactosidase and cellulase) can further help break down plant fibers and reduce bloating.
 - Digestive Enzymes Ultra by Pure Encapsulations is my go-to digestive enzyme supplement.
- If you can't tolerate these items AT ALL, that's a sign that your gut could use some work! Totally eliminating them long term isn't the solution- addressing and supporting gut imbalances will help to improve your tolerance to these foods.

#4

Not pooping daily.

Have you ever been told that pooping every couple of days is fine? It may be "fine", but it sure isn't optimal! Pooping is one of our body's primary ways to excrete toxins and waste. In addition, regular bowel movements are vital to reducing bloat since the longer poop hangs out in your colon, the more likely it is to ferment and produce gas, leading to uncomfortable bloating.

Do this instead:

There are a bunch of ways you can try and get those bowels moving!

These include:

- Upping your fiber intake from whole foods!
 - Aiming for 25–35 g fiber by eating a variety of fruits and vegetables, nuts/seeds, legumes, and whole grains.
 - It may be helpful to track fiber intake for a few days to see where you are at, then gradually increase from there.
 - Work your way up slowly. Suddenly, upping your fiber intake can cause you to get even more backed up and bloated if your body can't handle it!)
- Eating 1–2 T of ground flaxseeds or chia seeds daily.
- Eating 2 kiwis daily.
- Upping your water intake — aim for 1/2 of your body weight in oz (150 lb= 75 oz. of water) — this is, again, vital when increasing your fiber intake! Warm water with lemon can help with constipation too.
- Increasing gentle movement — Walking after meals and stretching helps to stimulate those bowels!
 - Try out [this yoga flow](#) to help relieve digestive symptoms.
- Supporting that MMC by not grazing (see #1) and focusing on HOW to eat (see #2!)



#4

Not pooping daily. Part 2- it's that important!

Do this instead:

- Taking a magnesium citrate supplement before bed. This can pull water into the bowels, making stool easier to pass.
 - I like Pure Encapsulations- Magnesium Citrate.
 - Note: it's essential to uncover the root cause of constipation, but this is often a great place to start to get bowels moving and relieve constipation.
- Trying ginger or peppermint tea or a little bit of whole leaf aloe juice (start with 1-2 oz). These are great for supporting motility.
- Low stomach acid or inadequate digestive juices can result in bloating and constipation. To support stomach acid and digestion, try:
 - Apple cider vinegar diluted in water before meals (2 tsp diluted in 8 oz water- start with 1 tsp and increase as tolerated)
 - Digestive bitters (brands I like: Urban Moonshine, Organic Olivia) - when using bitters let them sit on your tongue for 10-20 seconds to help stimulate the bitter receptors before swallowing (note: bitters aren't safe for pregnancy. Like all supplements- check with your health practitioner before starting)
- Increasing intake of potassium rich foods helps stimulate peristalsis (muscle contractions that help move food & waste through your digestive system) - think coconut water, tomatoes, avocados, cantaloupe and carrots.
- Trying a squatty potty. This helps place your colon in the ideal position for easy bowel movements without strain.

There are many reasons for chronic constipation or slow motility (such as inadequate stomach acid, imbalance of gut bacteria, gut infections, inadequate enzyme output) so finding the underlying cause is key to finding the right long-term solution for you.



#5

Consuming common bloat triggers.

Unfortunately, there are some common triggers that result in bloating and discomfort for so many of us! If you are consuming these regularly, consider removing them or being extra mindful of how they impact you!

Do this instead:

- Avoid/reduce intake of carbonated beverages (note: straws can also worsen bloat!)
- Refer to #3 for a list of healthy foods that can actually worsen bloat (like cruciferous vegetables, beans/legumes) and my tips to better tolerate them.
- Be on the lookout for the ingredients listed below (checking food labels is a great way to steer clear of them).
 - Sugar alcohols: maltitol, mannitol, sorbitol, erythritol, xylitol (anything ending in "ol", found in most Keto/low sugar products)
 - Added fibers: inulin, chicory root, fructooligosaccharides (often found in protein bars)
 - Artificial sweeteners: Aspartame, sucralose, saccharin
- If you are experiencing persistent, severe bloating, the low FODMAP diet may be helpful for you. FODMAPs are fermentable fibers that can often cause digestive issues like bloating.
 - Note the low FODMAP diet may help you manage symptoms and identify triggers but won't fix the underlying cause. I highly recommend working with a practitioner to uncover the root cause of your bloating. Refer [here](#) for more on the low FODMAP diet.



#6

Long Term Restrictive Diets

Short-term elimination diets can certainly help manage symptoms and identify trigger foods when necessary. For example, some people with digestive issues have problems with lactose or high FODMAP foods, so removing those for a short while and then re-introducing them to see if they are triggers may be a helpful approach.

However, I often see people eliminating an extensive list of foods for months or years because they were afraid to reintroduce them or couldn't successfully able to add back foods without triggering symptoms! Long term restrictive diets lead to a deprived microbiome (especially the low FODMAP diet- these foods are prebiotics that feed beneficial bacteria) which can worsen gut health and increase stress or fear around food.

If you feel like EVERYTHING causes your belly to bloat, know that **gut health isn't ONLY about what we eat!** Usually, there is an underlying cause to why food intolerances/sensitivities exist. That's why elimination diets aren't a root cause approach. Instead, finding out WHY foods are a problem and addressing the root cause will allow you to eat the foods you like without fear of triggering digestive upset.

Do this instead:

- If you are undergoing an elimination diet, ensure the elimination phase is as short as possible and always have a clear plan to reintroduce foods. It's KEY to work with a practitioner who can walk you through how to safely and effectively undergo an elimination diet/re-introductions step by step and help you troubleshoot if issues arise.
- If you end up having to eliminate an extensive list of foods to manage your gut symptoms, I recommend working with a functionally trained practitioner to help identify and address the root cause of your gut symptoms.



#7

Not Uncovering The Root Cause

If you feel like you've tried it all but haven't seen the results you'd like, it's time to take a different approach.

Functional gut testing helps uncover the root cause (the WHY) behind your gut issues.

Symptom management approaches like restrictive diets may reduce your symptoms initially but worsen gut health over time and take the joy out of eating.

By using testing to identify the root cause of your digestive issues, we remove the guesswork and create a faster path to healing. It is the most effective way to eliminate gut symptoms *for good*.

Stool testing gives us insight into:

- Diversity and balance of bacteria in your gut (beneficial and dysbiotic/bad bacteria)
- Presence of pathogens, parasites, fungi/yeast
- Markers of fat digestion, enzyme output, estrogen metabolism
- Gut immune function
- Gluten reactivity
- Gut inflammation
- Imbalances in any of these above areas can cause persistent bloating.

If you are tired of guessing then it's time for root cause approach utilizing stool testing and personalized nutrition, lifestyle and supplement protocols as your next step – that's exactly what I am here to help you with!



Your Bloat-Free Checklist

Implement these changes to get on the right track to a bloat-free life!



Limit Grazing

- Space meals/snacks 3-4 hrs apart
- Aim for 12 hrs of digestive rest overnight



Focus on HOW to eat

- 5 deep breaths before meals
- slow down (put your utensil down between bites!)
- chew until applesauce consistency



Be mindful of common bloat triggers

- see #3 and #5 for specific examples.



Poop DAILY!

- I list lots of ways to get things moving, choose 1-2 to start.



Eat a varied diet!

- Long term restrictive diets can deplete good gut bacteria and worsen gut issues in the long run.



Uncover the root cause of your bloating!

- I'm here to help!

Still Struggling?



I'll help you get to the root cause of your gut issues using the right testing and bring you TRUE healing.

NEXT STEPS:

- 1) Schedule your free 30 min gut health strategy call – we'll chat and make sure we are a great fit and determine next steps.
- 2) We'll utilize testing to dig deep and understand what is going on in your gut.
- 3) We'll get you started on your personalized nutrition, lifestyle and supplement protocols. I'll make sure you have all the tools you need to heal your gut and get your life back.

[Schedule A FREE Strategy Call](#)