



 Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

F l a t u l e n c e (G a s) T r e a t m e n t

Experience has shown that the most common ways to reduce the discomfort of gas are changing diet, taking medicines, and reducing the amount of air swallowed.

S e l f - C a r e a t H o m e

Flatulence is most often related to diet, and sometimes to those habits that cause you to swallow air. You can begin by trying to remove the problem foods from your diet. For many people, this is a trial-and-error procedure.

This may take some careful observation to notice what foods cause increased gas. Keep a food diary and note excess passage of gas. Any of the gas-producing foods can be removed from your diet one group at a time until you see relief.

Examples are:

- Beans
 - Vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, onions
 - Fruits such as pears, apples, peaches
 - Whole grains such as bran
 - Soft drinks and fruit drinks
 - Milk and milk products
 - Packaged foods with lactose such as cereal and bread
 - Dietetic foods, sugar-free candies, and gum containing sorbitol
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- If this method does not work, a more restrictive approach is to start with a very limited number of safe foods, and add one new food every 48 hours in order to determine what food or food group causes difficulty. If the offending food is found, then you can avoid eating that food or be prepared for its consequences.
 - If you suspect lactose intolerance is the problem, remove all dairy foods from your diet for 10-14 days to assess the effect on flatulence (using a diary). The enzyme lactase, which aids with lactose digestion, is available in liquid and tablet form without a prescription (Lactaid, Lactrase, and Dairy Ease are familiar brand names). Adding a few drops of liquid lactase

to milk before drinking it or chewing lactase tablets just before eating helps digest foods that contain lactose. Also, lactose-reduced milk and other products are available at many grocery stores (Lactaid and Dairy Ease).

- If odor is a concern, there is some reported success with charcoal filter undergarments.
- If belching is a problem, you should avoid the behaviors that cause you to swallow air, such as chewing gum or eating hard candy. Eat slowly. Make sure your dentures fit properly if you wear them.
- In general, avoid overeating because this contributes to flatulence as well as obesity. Limit high-fat foods to reduce bloating and discomfort. Your stomach will empty faster, allowing gases to move into the small intestine.

Medical Treatment

The goal of treatment of flatulence is to reduce gas and odor. Medical intervention includes treatment with antibiotics if bacterial overgrowth of the gastrointestinal tract is suspected or evidence of parasitic infection is seen.

- Some promising studies have investigated feeding nonoffensive strains of bacteria to push out the bacteria that are offensive, although no established treatments are available at this time.
- Regulation of bowel function is essential. Constipation should be treated with increased dietary fiber or certain laxatives.
- In cases where anxiety causes you to swallow air, your doctor may suggest you seek mental health counseling to change habit patterns.

more information from eMedicineHealth

- [When to Seek Medical Care](#)
- [Exams and Tests](#)
- [Next Steps](#)

For more information, read the complete article, Flatulence (Gas)

(<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=59277>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

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