

# Digestion

Healthy digestion is fundamental for health. You know the old saying, you are what you eat? Well, we like to say you are what you absorb. Without proper digestion and absorption that kale salad you had for lunch isn't going to do you any good. Plus, poor digestion often comes with unpleasant symptoms like gas, bloating, burping, heartburn, constipation and diarrhea. But it can also show up as anxiety, hormone imbalance, acne, depression, allergies, low energy, and many other symptoms you wouldn't necessarily think to associate with digestion. Bottom line? Digestion and gut health are super important to overall health and wellness.

So what causes digestive issues? A top offender is food sensitivities. During P20, we're pulling out the common ones like gluten and dairy as well as sugar and alcohol which can lead to gut distress. Other causes include stress, medications/ antibiotics, yeast overgrowth (due to bacterial imbalance), low stomach acid, low digestive enzymes, inflammation, and genetics. Here's how to combat these common triggers and heal your gut naturally to get back on track toward optimal digestion and health.

## If you're experiencing bloat or discomfort:

- Chew your food... then chew it some more. Chewing is the first important step of digestion. Your stomach doesn't have teeth (surprise!) and is not designed to break down large chunks of food. Chewing not only helps to physically break down food to prepare it for digestion in your stomach but it also allows digestive enzymes in your saliva to start chemically breaking down your food.
- Soak beans and/ or grains before cooking to remove some of the indigestible sugars and starches.
- Sip ginger or peppermint tea or chew fennel seeds to ease indigestion and help with bloating.

## If you're experiencing constipation:

- Drink plenty of water. Start with a cup of warm water with lemon each morning and continue to drink water throughout the day.
- Get plenty of magnesium from dark leafy greens and supplement if needed. Natural Calm is a powder you can mix with water before bed to help with sleep and constipation (kill two birds with one stone!).
- Add fiber-filled foods like fruits, veggies, ground flax seed, chia seed, and dried figs and/ or prunes. Remember to drink plenty of water to keep things moving.
- Speaking of moving... exercise! Moving your body helps to keep things moving in your digestive tract, too. Walking and yoga can be very helpful

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If you're experiencing diarrhea:

- Skip the raw food. Focus on cooked food and veggies instead since raw foods can be hard on digestion.
- Avoid too much caffeine. Caffeine has a laxative effect on many people so cut back if you suspect this could be a culprit.
- Sip on bone broth. Its amino acids are soothing and healing to the gut.
- Eat plenty of fiber... but not too much. Fiber can help bulk up stool but too much can have a laxative effect. Find a happy balance.
- Add fermented foods like kimchi, miso, sauerkraut, and kombucha to help rebuild a healthy gut flora and balance out the bacteria in your gut.