

Indigestion

Indigestion is a type of pain and sick feeling after eating food.

What to look for

- [Heartburn](#).
- Gas or burping.
- Abdominal pressure and flatulence.
- Mild nausea.
- Vomiting.

We should not normally notice the digestion process. Indigestion is a term that covers a large variety of assorted stomach problems but mostly it means pain after eating food, usually accompanied by a bloated and sick feeling.

Indigestion is either a symptom of a disease or the result of eating unfavourable foods.

Indigestion may be occasional or occur daily. Though uncomfortable, indigestion itself is not life-threatening. However, this condition should not be left untreated.

Causes

This is a disorder which everyone will feel occasionally.

It has many causes such as

- Too much food consumption
- [Overindulging in alcohol](#);
- Frequently using analgesics and other pain relievers;
- Eating while stressed;
- Eating food that does not agree with your system.
- Eating in a hurry and not chewing your food properly

[Obesity](#) and smoking are two major causes of chronic indigestion.

Traditional Treatment

There are many treatments available to help indigestion and the right one depends on your symptoms. Your doctor or Pharmacist will advise which course of action to take.

Alternative/Natural Treatments

Herbal Therapies – Various teas may calm digestive distress. To reduce stomach acidity, drink meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*) tea.

If you also feel stressed, add [lavender](#) (*Lavandula officinalis*) or [chamomile](#) (*Matricaria recutita*).

If bloating or gas is a problem, try a tea of [peppermint](#) (*Mentha piperita*), chamomile, or lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*).

Certain herbs are able to help with digestion and heartburn. About 30 minutes before eating, drink 1/2 cup of tea made from [goldenseal](#) (*Hydrastis canadensis*), [barberry](#) (*Berberis vulgaris*) bark, [gentian](#) (*Gentiana lutea*) root, or Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*) root.

[Ginger](#) is another herb with properties that can aid digestion.

Dietary Considerations

Try a low fat diet with less protein from fatty foods, highly spiced foods, sugars, alcohol, tea and coffee. Do not drink too much fluid with your meals. Chew slowly. Try *Acidophilus Bifidus* to maintain good levels of friendly intestinal flora. Fruits that have digestive enzymes are pawpaw, kiwi fruit and pineapple. It is wise to start eating natural live yogurt as well.

Personal Care

- Refrain from smoking.
- For occasional indigestion with heartburn, use antacids if recommended by your doctor or try an alternative solution – see above
- Try one or several of the herbal teas above to relieve your specific symptoms.
- Relax during and after eating.
- If you frequently chew gum, stop for a while to see if your symptoms dissipate.
- Avoid the foods mentioned above to improve your digestion.
- Drink more fluids – filtered water is best – during the day but try not to have too much fluid while eating as this can dilute the digestive enzymes.

Prevention

Indigestion is universal; it's almost impossible to avoid it forever. You can encounter it less often, however, if you watch your weight; avoid overeating or overindulging in alcohol; avoid your “trigger” foods; and abstain from smoking.

When to seek further professional advice

- Any abdominal pain continues for more than six hours
- You experience indigestion with any other problematic symptom
- You have repeated bouts of severe indigestion
- Your indigestion consistently follows eating dairy products.