



## **Helpful hints for controlling gas (flatus)**

Bowel incontinence (BI) can also mean inability to control gas. Sometimes it is just the problem of the offensive smell. There are many causes. Altering your lifestyle may help to resolve or reduce the problem. Different techniques help different people. It is important to remember that there may be more than one contributing factor.

### *Eating*

Some foods produce more gas than others. However, this is different for every individual and food that produces gas for one person may not do so for another. Try avoiding some of these foods to see if it makes things better for you. Try to eliminate them one at a time. This way you will be able to tell which food may be the culprit.

- Hot spicy foods can speed up how fast food moves through your bowels. This can produce additional gas.
- Rich, fatty foods, especially fried foods, may increase gas in some people
- Try eating a little more slowly. When you eat fast, you swallow extra air with your food. Try to not talk while eating. Extra air while eating can lead to belching and gas production.
- Eating at the same time each day and eating smaller meals more frequently may be beneficial as well. It is easier on your intestines and can decrease gas.
- Try to eat a balanced diet. Foods with high fiber may initially increase gas production. However, the this will decrease over time.

### *Drinking*

- Caffeine can increase bowel activity and increase gas. Caffeine is also a diuretic and draws fluid from your body.
- Carbonated drinks can increase belching and gas production.
- Beer can increase gas production.
- It is better not to drink fluids with your food. Drinking fluids with meals can increase your air intake and increase gas.



## Gas Producing Foods

### Foods which cause a normal amount of gas (allowed):

1. Meat, Fowl, Fish
2. Vegetables: Lettuce, Peppers, Avocado, Tomato, Asparagus, Zucchini, Okra, Olives
3. Fruits: Cantaloupe, Grapes, Berries
4. Carbohydrates: White Rice, Chips, Popcorn, Graham Crackers
5. All nuts
6. Eggs, Jello, Fruit Ice

### Foods which cause a moderate amount of gas (may need to avoid):

1. Potatoes
2. Eggplant
3. Citrus Fruits, Apples
4. Carbohydrates: Pastries, Bread

### Major gas producers (avoid):

1. Vegetables: Onions, Celery, Carrots, Brussels Sprouts, Cucumber, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Radishes
2. Beans
3. Fruit: Raisins, Bananas, Apricots, Prunes, dried fruit
4. Carbohydrates: Bagels, Wheat Germ, Pretzels
5. Peas
6. Green Salads
7. Bran cereal / foods high in bran
8. Brown rice
9. Leeks, parsnips

Everybody tolerates foods differently. Some foods that are major gas producers for some people may cause normal gas for others. This list should be used as a guide to help determine the best gas reducing diet for you specifically.

Be aware that the foods high in fiber are usually major gas producers. These high fiber foods are important for normal bowel function so they should not be eliminated totally.

*Information provided by the Michigan Bowel Control Program (MBCP)*