

Beat the bloat in 7 days

Easy meals that will make those skinny jeans feel comfortable again

Certain everyday foods can bloat your belly causing you to feel uncomfortable and even look bigger! It's commonly caused by water retention or gas – a build-up of air in the intestines and stomach, which gives you the feeling your abdomen is distended.

Follow this meal plan, designed by dietitian Sunette Swart, to banish bloating for good. Flatten your tummy and boost your energy levels.

Tips for your tum

▶ Follow a low-fat eating plan

Reduce your total fat intake by removing all visible fat from meat, choosing products lower in fat and using low-fat preparation methods (such as baking, grilling, boiling and steaming). Fried foods are difficult to digest and should be avoided as they may cause cramps and sometimes diarrhoea.

▶ **Eat regular meals** Aim for three meals and healthy in-between snacks a day. Never skip a meal and avoid large dinners.

▶ **Drink 10 glasses of water** Drink a glass of water 10 minutes before each meal and snack, and another glass of water within 30 minutes after every meal and snack. Avoid sugary beverages if you are overweight or diabetic. Fizzy drinks may also aggravate symptoms.

▶ **Follow a daily exercise programme** This stimulates bowel movement and helps you to relax.

▶ **Take a daily supplement** Probiotics are live microorganisms (bacteria) that occur in the gastrointestinal tract. If the delicate balance of "good" bacteria is disrupted (due to use of antibiotics or stress) it can contribute to some of the symptoms experienced with irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

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FOODS TO AVOID WHEN YOU'RE TRYING TO BEAT THE BLOAT

- ▶ Skins and pips of fruit and vegetables
- ▶ Wholegrain kernels
- ▶ Seeds
- ▶ Nuts
- ▶ Crunchy peanut butter
- ▶ Dried fruit
- ▶ Coconut
- ▶ Dried legumes
- ▶ Caffeine
- ▶ Smoked and charred foods
- ▶ Gas-forming fruit and vegetables such as cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, lettuce, cucumber, green beans, watermelon and sweet melon

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
<p>Breakfast ½ C wholewheat ProNutro (original) 1 C fat-free milk</p> <p>Morning snack Fruit**</p> <p>Lunch 2 slices low-GI bread 2 slices lean ham Mustard to taste</p> <p>Afternoon snack Fruit**</p> <p>Supper 120 g roasted chicken ½ C cooked brown rice ½ C spinach ½ gem squash Cinnamon to taste</p> 	<p>Breakfast 1 C cooked Bokomo oats with added Hi-Fibre bran (sweetener optional)</p> <p>Morning snack Fruit**</p> <p>Lunch 1 C cooked pasta 40 g roasted chicken 2 T low-fat salad dressing or low-fat mayonnaise</p> <p>Afternoon snack Fruit**</p> <p>Supper 90 g beef fillet ½ C couscous Julienne butternut and baby marrows 1 T sweet & sour sauce (-5g fat per 100g)</p> 	<p>Breakfast 1 C All-Bran cereal 1 C fat-free milk</p> <p>Morning snack Fruit**</p> <p>Lunch 3-6 Ryvitas Fat-free cottage cheese Chutney or tomato sauce to taste</p> <p>Afternoon snack Fruit**</p> <p>Supper 3 baby potatoes 150 g mackerel Lemon juice to taste Carrot salad*</p> 	<p>Breakfast 2 apples or pears (peeled, no pips and skin) 1 C plain fat-free yoghurt Cinnamon to taste (sweetener optional)</p> <p>Morning snack Fruit**</p> <p>Lunch ½ C cooked macaroni 50 g tuna (in brine) Cooked mixed sweet peppers Balsamic vinegar to taste</p> <p>Afternoon snack Fruit**</p> <p>Supper 90 g savoury mince ½ C basmati rice ½ C roasted Mediterranean vegetables with black pepper</p> 
<p>Day 5</p> <p>Breakfast 2 low-GI muffins* 30 g low-fat cheese</p> <p>Morning snack Fruit**</p> <p>Lunch 1 small wholewheat pita 40 g chicken breast (or use leftover mince from the previous day) Mushrooms and carrot strips Tomato ¼ small avocado</p> <p>Afternoon snack Fruit**</p> <p>Supper 120 g grilled pork chop (trimmed fat) ½ baked sweet potato 1 C beetroot salad* 1-2 t olive oil</p> 	<p>Day 6</p> <p>Breakfast 2 slices rye bread 1 scrambled egg</p> <p>Morning snack Fruit**</p> <p>Lunch 1 low-GI bread roll 1 slice silverside 1 t piccalilli (no margarine)</p> <p>Afternoon snack Fruit**</p> <p>Supper 120 g sirloin steak (fat trimmed) 3 boiled baby potatoes ½ C pumpkin ½ C spinach</p>	<p>Day 7</p> <p>Breakfast 2 low-GI rusks* 1 C fat-free yoghurt</p> <p>Morning snack Fruit**</p> <p>Lunch 120 g roasted chicken breast fillet Low-fat mushroom sauce* 1 C frozen mixed vegetables</p> <p>Afternoon snack Fruit**</p> <p>Supper ½ C pasta 50g tuna Low-fat mushroom sauce*</p>	 <p>DITCH THE SALT And increase your water intake to help your kidneys to do their job.</p> <p>“Steer clear of fizzy drinks, chewing gum and drinking through straws as they force you to swallow air”</p> <p>Key chart: 1 C = 250ml t = teaspoon T = tablespoon</p> <p>**Fruit = size of a tennis ball/2 golf balls/½ C fruit salad. Fruit must be peeled with no pips and skins. * Recipes at www.shapemag.co.za</p>

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