

Flatulence

Flatulence is excessive formation of gas in the digestive tract. It sometimes can be the cause of severe pain, distention and bloating, as well as social embarrassment.

Most flatus is caused by bacteria in the colon, which ferment undigested food and create gas as a by-product. Swallowing air also contributes to the amount of gas in the intestines. Certain foods likely to increase intestinal gas may be eliminated and include:

- Legumes (dried peas and beans)
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Onions
- Turnips



Some other suggestions include:

- Avoiding foods containing large amounts of air, e.g. carbonated beverages, whips and meringues.
- Increasing the fiber content of your diet, gradually so the bowel becomes used to it.
- Avoid use of straws when drinking as they pull more air into the digestive tract.
- Eat slowly and chew with your mouth closed.
- Avoid chewing gum.

Simethicone is a defoaming agent. It causes gas bubbles to be broken down or coalesced into a form that is eliminated more easily by belching or passing flatus. Simethicone is available by itself as Gas-X or Mylanta-Gas, or in combination with an antacid in Maalox Plus or Mylanta.

Beano is the brand name of a product containing an enzyme that decreases the gassiness or bloating which results from eating various grains, cereals, and legumes (e.g., oats, beans, lentils, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbages, onions, corn, etc.) It is added to the offending food prior to consumption or taken in pill form before eating.

If flatulence accompanies a major change in bowel habits, see your care provider.