

Heal Your Hormones

Digestive Health

1. **Stay Hydrated.** Your digestive system and body don't work efficiently when they're like a dry sponge. Easy bowel movements and waste removal rely on ample hydration. Make sure that you get plenty of water without chlorine and fluoride every day to stay hydrated. Poor hydration also causes stress hormones to rise causing more inflammation.
2. **Move Regularly.** A fitness routine is a good idea for everyone, but for those with digestive issues it's especially helpful. Exercise increases circulation while massaging and toning your entire digestive system. Aim for 15-30 minutes of activity at least 3 to 4 times a week. Massaging your stomach and lower abdomen can be so helpful...here's how: start at the right lower side of your abdomen. Slowly make circles in a clockwise direction using gentle pressure.
3. **Slow Down and CHEW!** Your teeth are part of your digestive system, too. When you use them to thoroughly chew your food—think mashed potatoes—the rest of your digestive system doesn't have to work so hard.
4. **Add Beneficial Bacteria to Your Diet.** It's the life in food that gives us life. Add foods that are full of probiotics and prebiotics to your diet. Probiotic rich foods include: coconut or cashew yogurt or kefir, raw sauerkraut, kimchee, cultured vegetables, unpasteurized olives and pickles, natto, and raw vinegars - like apple cider vinegar. Prebiotic rich foods include: jicama, dandelion green, asparagus, green bananas, chicory, eggplant, fruit, garlic, green tea, Jerusalem artichokes, leeks, onions, chives, scallions, avocado, potato skins, apple cider vinegar, and peas. You may choose to add a probiotic supplement to your routine.

Heal Your Hormones

5. **Get enough fiber.** The daily recommendation for dietary fiber is a minimum of 25 grams per day. Fiber helps regulate your digestive system, giving it bulk to push against, cleaning the digestive tract, and binding to toxins for removal. Fiber also feeds beneficial bacteria keeping your microbiome healthy and happy. Try fiber-rich foods like vegetables, fruits, legumes (all beans except green beans), flax seeds, chia seeds, nuts/seeds, etc. You may want to add in a fiber supplement for a while to help.
6. **Cook at Home.** When you prepare foods in your own kitchen, you have better control of the ingredients and cooking methods, so you can make foods that are healthy and easily digested. You also prepare your body for digestion from the smells coming from the kitchen! An added bonus: cooking is also nurturing and rejuvenating and can really bring the family together.
7. **Start With More Cooked Foods.** Cooked foods are easier to digest than raw foods. If you are tired, or having digestive problems, eat only cooked foods until your bowel movements become more regular and well formed. Soups, stews, chilis, scrambles and shakes (because the food is broken down) are easier to digest and are so delicious.
8. **Have Fruit For Dessert.** For sweet desserts, try poached pears or applesauce without added sugar. Sugar can disrupt digestion (and your immune system) in a big way. Avoid it and use whole, real, in-season fruit as a sweet treat instead.
9. **Eat For Hormone Balance.** Use a shallow bowl for your meals and follow Robin's Rules for Eating for Hormone Balance. This will keep you satisfied and feeling fabulous so you don't have cravings for foods that will cause digestive problems.
10. **Know Your Food Sensitivities.** Most of us with hormonal imbalances have food sensitivities, which can cause far reaching symptoms including: bloating, cramping, heartburn, indigestion, gas, stomach pain, chronic headaches, depression, inability to concentrate, aching muscles and joints and low energy levels. The most common food

Heal Your Hormones

sensitivities include: wheat, dairy, soy, eggs, and citrus (not lemons as much), and some are reactive to the nightshade vegetables like: peppers, potatoes, eggplant, and tomatoes. You'll be doing a food sensitivity panel later in your program to identify your specific food intolerances.

11. **STOP Antacids.** They neutralize your stomach acid which will compromise your digestion and your health in general. If you suffer from acid reflux or GERD, it's most likely because you have low stomach acid. Consider drinking 1 tsp of raw apple cider vinegar in water before each meal to help improve your digestion. You'll also receive an individual protocol to help you.
12. **Use the Belly Bloat Checklist.** If you suffer from bloating, gas and overall digestive discomfort, use the Belly Bloat Checklist for several weeks to help your digestion settle down and get back to normal.
13. **Have at Least One Bowel Movement Everyday.** This is critical for overall health. You need to have a least one, well-formed bowel movement every day. Make sure it's darker in color, long, mostly in one piece, softer rather than hard (easy to pass) and pointed at one end. This is the perfect BM! You can use extra magnesium to help you along if you tend towards constipation.
14. **Keep the Conversation Positive.** At the dinner table it's important to keep the conversation light and upbeat. Stress compromises digestion!
15. **Sit For Five Minutes.** Sit for five minutes after you finish your meal, and then take a 15 minute walk. This will help your rest and digest nervous system to work on digestion, and then the walking will help you to become more insulin sensitive, using your blood sugar for fuel instead of fat!

Heal Your Hormones

16. **Reduce Stress in Every Area of Your Life.** Stress in all forms, takes the blood flow away from digestion and moves it out into the periphery of your body so you can run from the tiger. You must be in a relaxed state to digest your meal.
17. **Eat Sitting Down.** Eating on the run or when standing at the kitchen counter will cause poor digestion. Sit when you eat and enjoy every bite. Taste your food, enjoy the flavors and think about how blessed you are to have beautiful food to eat.