

Heal Your Gut  
Naturally:  
*17 Steps to Banish Stomach  
Pain, Indigestion, and  
Bloating*

**By**

**Dr Michael Klein**

**Copyright © 2025 by Dr Michael Klein**

**All rights reserved.**

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise without written permission from the publisher. It is illegal to copy this book, post it to a website, or distribute it by any other means without permission.

Dr Michael Klein has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Designations used by companies to distinguish their products are often claimed as trademarks. All brand names and product names used in this book and on its cover are trade names, service marks, trademarks, and registered trademarks of their respective owners. The publishers and the book are not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book. None of the companies referenced within the book have endorsed the book.

This book, in places, details the author's personal experiences with and opinions about research publications and patient interactions.

The author is providing this book and its contents on an “as is” basis and makes no representations or warranties of any kind with respect to this book or its contents. The author and publisher disclaim all such representations and warranties, including, for example, warranties of merchantability and healthcare for a particular purpose. In addition, the author does not represent or warrant that the information accessible via this book is accurate, complete, or current.

The dietary suggestions presented in this book have not been evaluated by any official medical or government organization, unless clearly stated otherwise in the book. They are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any condition or disease. Please consult with your own physician or healthcare specialist regarding the suggestions and recommendations made in this book.

Except as specifically stated in this book, neither the author nor publisher, nor any authors, contributors, or other representatives will be liable for damages arising out of or in connection with the use of this book.

This is a comprehensive limitation of liability that applies to all damages of any kind, including (without limitation) compensatory, direct, indirect, or consequential damages; loss of data, income, or profit; loss of or damage to property, and claims of third parties.

You understand that this book is not intended as a substitute for consultation with a licensed healthcare practitioner, such as your physician. Before you begin any healthcare program, or change your lifestyle in any way, you should consult your physician or another licensed healthcare practitioner to ensure that you are in good health and that the examples contained in this book will not harm you.

This book provides content related to physical and mental health issues. As such, use of this book implies your acceptance of this disclaimer.

**First edition**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Preventive Measures .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Steps 1–17: Natural Remedies for Stomach Pain, Indigestion, and Bloating .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Step 1: Keep a Food & Symptom Journal (Identify Your Triggers) .....	18
Step 2: Eat Mindfully and Don't Rush Meals ....	19
Step 3: Avoid Common Dietary Triggers .....	20
Step 4: Embrace Soothing Herbal Teas (Peppermint, Chamomile, Ginger) .....	21
Step 5: Use Fennel or Caraway to Fight Gas .....	25
Step 6: Add Fermented Foods or Probiotics Daily .....	27
Step 7: Gradually Increase Dietary Fiber (Especially Soluble Fiber) .....	29
Step 8: Try a Low-FODMAP Diet Trial (if IBS Symptoms Persist) .....	31
Step 9: Manage Stress and Practice Relaxation Techniques .....	33
Step 10: Exercise Regularly, but Gently .....	36
Step 11: Apply Heat for Quick Pain Relief .....	38

Step 12: Try Gentle Abdominal Massage .....	40
Step 13: Consider Natural Digestive Aids (Bitters, Apple Cider Vinegar, or Enzymes) .....	42
Step 14: Optimize Your Sleep and Gut Posture at Night.....	45
Step 15: Know and Respect Your Limits (Gradual Dietary Expansion) .....	48
Step 16: Lifestyle Tips for Recovery and Long- Term Gut Health.....	52
Step 17: When to Seek Professional Help.....	56
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>61</b>
Further Reading and Resources .....	63
References.....	64

## Introduction

**S**tomach pain, indigestion, and bloating are extremely common digestive complaints that can disrupt daily life. From the gnawing discomfort of heartburn to the



uncomfortable swelling of a bloated belly, these symptoms often signal that our digestive system is under stress. Fortunately, many **natural, affordable remedies** can help address these issues at the source. This comprehensive guide (one of a ten-book ‘Budget-Friendly Healing At Home’ series) will walk you through gentle, science-backed approaches to heal your gut and relieve digestive distress without expensive medications. You’ll learn how simple diet tweaks, lifestyle changes, and home remedies can significantly reduce pain and discomfort. I am a Medical Doctor who has lived and worked in the area of pharmaceutical research across 3 continents (Africa, Asia and Australia) having also served on the African, Asian and European Boards of 2 multinational pharmaceutical companies over a period of over 20 years. Much of this time was spent analyzing and interpreting data to tease out high-value information from the avalanche of trials running concurrently. I appreciate the value of simplicity, as well as what, for most families, is the unaffordable financial burden of

sophisticated complex pharmaceuticals. This guide is one of a series aimed at cash-and-time-strapped families looking for fast, effective and affordable science-backed solutions for these all-too-frequent conditions. The approach in this guide is to blend the latest scientific research with traditional wisdom to provide safe, effective solutions for a happier gut.

## Preventive Measures

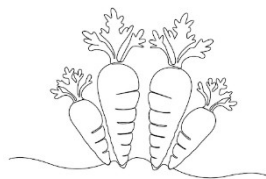
**T**he best way to handle digestive troubles is to prevent them in the first place. By making mindful lifestyle and dietary changes, you can **strengthen your digestive system** and avoid triggers that cause stomach pain, indigestion, and bloating. Here are key preventive strategies:

- **Watch What You Eat (and How You Eat):**

Focus on a balanced diet rich in **Whole Foods** and be mindful of portion sizes. Eating **five or six smaller meals** instead of a few large ones

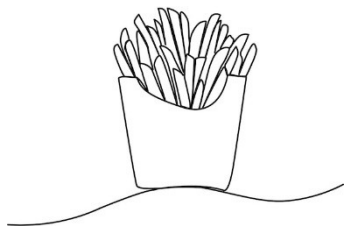
can ease the burden on your stomach. Take time to **chew slowly and thoroughly**, as

digestion begins in the mouth. Avoid lying down immediately after eating – give yourself



at least 2-3 hours to digest before bedtime to prevent acid reflux.

- **Identify and Limit Trigger Foods:** Certain foods and drinks are notorious for provoking indigestion and bloating. Common triggers include **fatty or fried foods, spicy dishes, caffeine, chocolate, carbonated beverages, and alcohol.**



For some people, **dairy or gluten** may also cause issues. Pay attention to your body's reactions.

Keeping a **food diary** can help pinpoint which foods make your symptoms worse. If you notice a pattern (for example, bloating every time you have ice cream or beans), try cutting back on that item to see if symptoms improve.

- **Incorporate Gut-Friendly Foods:** Just as some foods irritate your gut, others can **soothe and strengthen** it. High-fiber foods like **whole grains, fruits, and vegetables** support regular bowel movements and a healthy gut microbiome. **Fermented foods** rich in natural



probiotics – such as **yogurt with live cultures, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, and kombucha** – can increase the diversity of beneficial gut microbes and even reduce inflammation.<sup>1</sup> Lean proteins (fish, poultry), bone broth, and easy-to-digest cooked vegetables (like carrots or zucchini) are generally gentle on the stomach.

- **Stay Hydrated:** Drinking enough water throughout the day helps your digestion run smoothly and prevents constipation. Aim for at least 6–8 glasses of water daily. In addition, **herbal teas** can be both hydrating and healing – more on specific teas later.

---

<sup>1</sup> Hannah C. Wastyk, Gabriela K. Fragiadakis, Dalia Perelman, Dylan Dahan, Bryan D. Merrill, Feiqiao B. Yu, Madeline Topf, Carlos G. Gonzalez, William Van Treuren, Shuo Han, Jennifer L. Robinson, Joshua E. Elias, Erica D. Sonnenburg, Christopher D. Gardner, Justin L. Sonnenburg, *Gut-microbiota-targeted diets modulate human immune status, Cell, Volume 184, Issue 16, 2021, Pages 4137-4153.e14, ISSN 0092-8674, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2021.06.019>, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0092867421007546>*

- **Get Your Vitamins and Minerals:** Certain nutrients are essential for gut health. For example, **Vitamin D** has been shown to improve gut microbiota balance and reduce intestinal inflammation.



Unfortunately, many people with IBS or chronic digestive issues are deficient in Vitamin D. Safely getting more sun exposure or taking a Vitamin D supplement (with a doctor's guidance) may help. Minerals like **magnesium** are important too – magnesium relaxes muscles (including those in the intestinal wall) and can ease cramps or constipation. If you experience a lot of cramping or slow bowel movements, ask your healthcare provider about your magnesium levels. **Zinc** is another mineral critical for maintaining the intestinal lining and immune function in the gut; a mild zinc deficiency might contribute to poor digestion or slower healing of the gut lining. A standard multivitamin or mineral supplement can cover these bases, but whole foods are an even better source. Green leafy vegetables, nuts and seeds, and legumes will supply magnesium and zinc, while oily fish and fortified foods can provide vitamin D.

- **Mind Your Medications:** Some common medicines can irritate the stomach. **Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)** like aspirin or ibuprofen are a frequent cause of gastritis and indigestion. If you take pain relievers regularly for headaches or chronic pain, try to avoid NSAIDs on an empty stomach or ask your doctor for gut-friendlier alternatives (like acetaminophen). Also, certain antibiotics or supplements (like iron) can cause digestive upset – always take these with food unless instructed otherwise, and inform your doctor if they give you trouble.

- **Maintain a Healthy Weight:** Being overweight puts extra pressure on your abdomen, which can push



stomach acid up into the esophagus and trigger heartburn. Extra belly fat is also linked with increased bloating. Gradually adopting a healthier diet and regular exercise can shed excess pounds and reduce these pressures on your digestive organs.

- **Manage Stress:** Believe it or not, your **stress levels directly affect your digestion**. The brain and gut are closely connected (often

called the *gut-brain axis*). Stress and anxiety can lead to increased stomach acid or a spastic colon, worsening symptoms of indigestion and IBS. In fact, many people experience “nervous stomach” or stress-related flare-ups of pain and bowel habit changes. Practicing stress-reduction techniques – like deep breathing, meditation, gentle yoga, or even taking a relaxing walk – especially before or after meals, can help calm your gut. Creating a **calm environment at mealtimes** (e.g. eating slowly without screens or work in front of you) also aids digestion. Research shows that **psychological therapies and stress reduction can significantly improve IBS symptoms and quality of life**, with benefits lasting long-term [frontiersin.org](https://www.frontiersin.org). Simply put, a relaxed gut is a happier gut.

Below is a quick-reference table of some foods to **embrace** for gut health versus common foods to **avoid or limit** if you frequently experience digestive issues:

<b>Gut-Friendly Foods (to Include)</b>	<b>Potential Trigger Foods (limit/avoid)</b>
Yogurt, kefir, and fermented foods (rich in probiotics)	Spicy peppers, hot sauce, and chili powder
High-fiber fruits (berries, bananas, apples) and cooked vegetables	Fatty or fried foods (greasy burgers, french fries)
Soothing herbal teas (peppermint, chamomile, ginger)	Caffeine (coffee, strong black tea, energy drinks)
Whole grains (oats, brown rice, quinoa)	Carbonated drinks (soda, sparkling water if sensitive)
Lean proteins (fish, poultry, tofu)	Alcohol (beer, wine, liquor – can irritate stomach lining)
Bone broth and soups (gentle on digestion)	Dairy products (if lactose intolerant or sensitive)

Gut-Friendly Foods (to Include)	Potential Trigger Foods (limit/avoid)
Water and hydrating fluids (with electrolytes if needed)	Artificial sweeteners (in some sugar-free candies/gums, can cause gas)
Olive oil and small amounts of healthy fats (easy to digest)	Onions, garlic, beans, and cabbage (for some people, these cause bloating due to FODMAPs)

*Tip:* The above triggers don't affect everyone equally – for instance, garlic and beans are very healthy foods but happen to contain FODMAP carbohydrates that **some** guts have trouble breaking down, leading to gas. FODMAP carbohydrates are discussed further in Step 8. In short, they are **Fermentable Oligosaccharides, Disaccharides, Mono-saccharides, and Polyols**. They are a group of short-chain carbohydrates that are **poorly absorbed** in the small intestine and tend to ferment in the gut, causing gas, bloating, diarrhea, and other digestive discomforts in sensitive individuals (especially those with Irritable Bowel Syndrome, IBS).

Here's a breakdown of the **types of FODMAPs** and **common foods** that contain them:

1. **Oligosaccharides** (Fructans & Galacto-Oligosaccharides, GOS)
  - Found in **wheat, rye, onions, garlic, leeks, asparagus, and legumes (beans, lentils, chickpeas, soybeans)**
  - Humans lack the enzyme to break down these, so they ferment in the gut, producing gas.
2. **Disaccharides** (Lactose)
  - Found in **milk, soft cheeses, yogurt, ice cream, and some processed foods**
  - Requires the enzyme **lactase** to be properly digested. People with lactose intolerance lack sufficient lactase, leading to bloating, diarrhea, and gas.
3. **Monosaccharides** (Excess Fructose)
  - Found in **honey, apples, high-fructose corn syrup (in sodas and processed foods), mangoes, and pears**

- Excess fructose can overwhelm the body's ability to absorb it, leading to fermentation in the gut.

#### 4. **Polyols** (Sorbitol, Mannitol, Maltitol, Xylitol)

- Found in **sugar-free gum, mints, artificial sweeteners, apples, peaches, watermelon, cauliflower, and mushrooms**
- Poorly absorbed and often cause bloating and diarrhea.

Since **garlic and beans** are **high in oligosaccharides**, they are common triggers for bloating in people sensitive to FODMAPs. However, **they are still very healthy foods** for those who can tolerate them.

People with **IBS or functional bloating** often benefit from temporarily reducing high-FODMAP foods and then gradually reintroducing them to identify personal triggers. This is the basis of the **Low-FODMAP diet**, developed by Monash University, which has been shown to **reduce symptoms in about 70% of IBS sufferers**.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Nanayakkara WS, Skidmore PM, O'Brien L, Wilkinson TJ, Geary RB. Efficacy of the low FODMAP diet for treating



By following the above preventive measures, you will set a strong foundation for a healthy gut. Now, let's dive into the **17 steps** you can take to actively deal with stomach pain, indigestion, and bloating when they strike.

## Steps 1–17: Natural Remedies for Stomach Pain, Indigestion, and Bloating

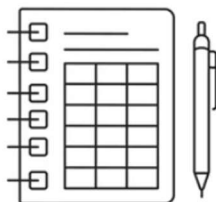
**I**n this section, we outline 17 practical steps, each addressing common causes or symptoms of digestive distress and offering a natural solution. These remedies are **science-backed and time-tested**, ranging from dietary adjustments and herbal aids to simple at-home therapies. You can adopt these steps individually, but often a combination will yield the best results.

---

irritable bowel syndrome: the evidence to date. Clin Exp Gastroenterol. 2016 Jun 17;9:131-42. doi: 10.2147/CEG.S86798. PMID: 27382323; PMCID: PMC4918736.

## Step 1: Keep a Food & Symptom Journal (Identify Your Triggers)

The first step to healing is understanding what's irritating your gut. Start by tracking your meals and symptoms in a journal or an app. Note *what* you ate and *how you felt afterward*. Do you consistently get heartburn



after tomato sauce or chili? Does your stomach bloat up an hour after having ice cream? Identifying patterns will help you pinpoint specific trigger foods or eating habits. Once you know your triggers, you can strategically eliminate or substitute them. For example, if **dairy** is a trigger and causes cramping or diarrhea (perhaps due to lactose intolerance), you can switch to lactose-free milk or plant-based alternatives. If heavy **fried foods** give you indigestion, opt for grilled or baked preparations instead. Everyone's gut triggers are a bit different – one person might not tolerate wheat, while another can eat bread but not spicy curries. Use your journal to personalize the advice in this guide to your own body. By step 1, you're essentially doing detective work on your diet. This awareness alone often leads to significant improvement, as you naturally start avoiding the worst offenders for your gut.

Other Books by Dr Michael Klein, including others in the ‘Budget-Friendly Healing at Home’ Book Series

