

Farting (flatulence)

Farting, also known as flatulence or wind, is normal. Everyone farts, some people more than others. Most people fart about 5 to 15 times a day.

Farting is normal

Farting is usually nothing to worry about. What's normal for some people is different for others.

If your farts are smelly or you fart a lot, it can be a sign of a health condition.

If you notice a change or it's affecting your life, there are things you can do.

What you can do to cut down excessive or smelly farts

Do

- ✓ eat smaller meals, more often
- ✓ drink or chew food slowly
- ✓ exercise to improve how your body digests food
- ✓ drink peppermint tea

Don't

- ✗ do not chew gum, smoke, suck pen tops or hard sweets
- ✗ do not wear loose-fitting dentures
- ✗ do not eat too many foods that are difficult to digest and make you fart

A pharmacist can help with excessive or smelly farts

A pharmacist will tell you if you can buy something to help. This might include charcoal tablets or pads to absorb smell.

They will also tell you if you should see a GP.

See a GP if:

- self-help and pharmacy treatments have not worked and farting is affecting your life
- you have a stomach ache or bloating that will not go away or keeps coming back
- you keep getting constipation or diarrhoea
- you've lost weight without trying
- there's blood or mucus in your poo

What causes excessive or smelly farts

Excessive or smelly farts can happen when you swallow air or eat foods that are hard to digest. It can sometimes be a sign of a health condition.

You may have other symptoms such as:

- difficulty pooing
- bloating
- stomach pain
- diarrhoea
- indigestion

These symptoms could be related to constipation, irritable bowel syndrome, coeliac disease or lactose intolerance.

Do not self-diagnose. See a GP if you're worried about farting.

Excessive or smelly farts can also be a side effect of some medicines, including:

- non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen
- some laxatives
- antifungal medicines
- statins

Do not stop or change your medication without speaking to your GP.

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